



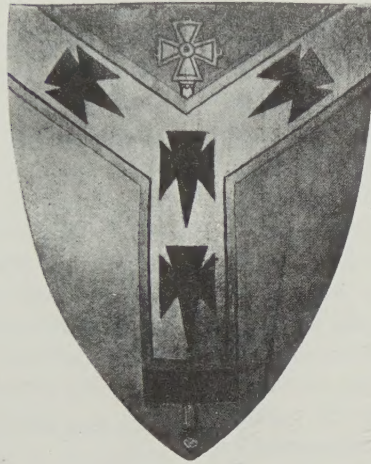
The Historiographer

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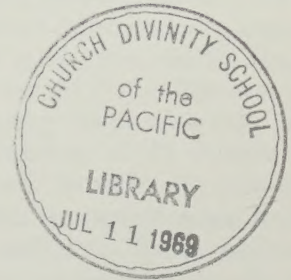
May

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CANTERBURY

Azure, a crosier or Episcopal staff in pale argent ensigned with a cross patée or, surmounted by a pall-throughout of the second, edged and fringed gold, and charged with four crosses formées-fitchées sable.



AMMI ROGERS AND THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT (1790—1832)

INTRODUCTION *

ECCLESIASTICAL TROUBLE; PROCEEDINGS IN THE CASE OF AMMI ROGERS; AND INTERPOSITION OF THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS INVOKED.

A. D. 1804-1805.

THE peace of the Church in Connecticut was disturbed by a new and mischievous trouble which arose about this time, and extended on beyond the administration of Bishop Jarvis. It is necessary to the truth of history that the story be fully told — otherwise these pages would not be occupied with what may seem, in the view of many readers, to be unprofitable matter.

A young man named Ammi Rogers, born at Branford and a graduate of Yale College in the class of 1790, having met with opposition in his native State where his character was best known, applied for Holy Orders in the Diocese of New York, and on the strength of a certificate signed with the name of the Rev. Philo Perry, Secretary of the Convocation of the Clergy of Connecticut, — which certificate was neither written nor signed by him,¹ — he was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Provoost in June, 1792, and at a later date the same prelate advanced him to the order of the Priesthood. Of pleasing appearance and insinuating address, he made strong friends for himself; and reported as the result of his ministrations in Saratoga County, in Schenectady and other places, where he first officiated, great interest in religious things and large accessions to the Church. He continued in Northern New York some nine years and employed the influence which his zealous and apparently successful labors had gained him to promote his selfish and ambitious ends. He was a delegate from New York to the General Convention which met in Philadelphia in 1799 — having secured his election to that body over a venerable city clergyman by adroitly impressing his brethren with a conviction of his ability, earnestness, and piety. In midsummer, 1801, he returned to Branford, and assumed the charge of the

parishes in that town, Wallingford and East Haven. The Bishop of Connecticut, knowing his early character and the ingenious fraud which he had practiced to obtain orders, refused to receive him, and the clergy refused to admit him a member of the Convocation, until he produced satisfactory testimonials from the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese in which he was ordained and to which he properly belonged. Had there been an explicit canon in regard to letters dimissory, such as the Church possesses now, there would have been no room for diversity of sentiment upon this subject; but the law was then to be inferred from general principles, and the friends of Rogers among the clergy, at least in the earliest stage of the proceedings, appear to have felt that he had some show of right on his side and ought to be received and recognized by virtue of his parochial cure. A month before the meeting of the Annual Convention of 1803, six Rectors in Connecticut — Dr. Mansfield, Solomon Blakeslee, John Tyler, Ambrose Todd, Joseph Warren, and Smith Miles — addressed a brief memorial to Bishop Jarvis in the following words: "That each parish has a right to choose its own Rector, and that when the Bishop's approbation is obtained he does, of course, become a member of the Convention, and that it appears from sufficient documents that the parishes under the charge of the Rev. A. Rogers have proceeded according to their right and the Canons of the Church in choosing him for their Rector, and the Bishop's actual approbation being obtained in one case, and no objections stated in the other, we therefore pray that he may take his seat in the Convention and become one of our number."

But the memorial thus supported was of no avail, nor were the letters which Mr. Rogers procured from New York satisfactory to the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese of Connecticut. He still insisted that he was entitled to a seat in the Convention, and his claims were urged with considerable pertinacity by one or two lay-members, whom he had succeeded in convincing that he was more the victim of private persecution than an object of just censure. He was a most ubiquitous character and appeared in all parts of the Diocese, officiating wherever he could gain admittance, calumniating the Bishop, seeking to divide the clergy, to poison the minds of the laity, and thus to create an unhappy schism in the Church. In com-

¹ While the case was under consideration, a clerical member of the standing committee, Dr. Beach, having heard of his rejection in Connecticut, opposed his ordination. "On this, Rogers repaired to that State, with the view of procuring from the Rev. Philo Perry, the Secretary of the Convention of the Diocese, a certificate that there did not appear on the minutes any entry of the rejection of the person in question. Such a certificate might have been given with great truth, because no formal application had been made. But Philo Perry being from home, Ammi Rogers fabricated a certificate in his name; not only testifying to the said fact, but going to the point of the correct life and conversation of the bearer. The last circumstance is of importance; because, although a certificate as to his not having applied for and been refused orders, was obtained from Philo Perry afterward, yet it went no further." — Bishop Whitto's *Memoirs of Prot. Epis.* Ch. p. 188.

pliance with the requirements of Canon second of the General Convention of 1792, official notice was given of these irregularities to the Bishop of New York, to whom the offender was amenable, but the notice was entirely disregarded and the irregularities were repeated in an aggravated form. Failing to reach him in any other way, the clergy, at a Convocation held in Litchfield on the 6th day of June, 1804, "resolved unanimously that the Bishop be requested to suspend the Rev. Ammi Rogers from the use of the churches in this Diocese." Accordingly a circular was issued five days afterwards of which the following is a copy:—

"The Rev. Ammi Rogers, now residing in this Diocese, hath for a long time conducted himself in such a way as is contrary to the rules of the Church and disgraceful to his office,—therefore, by the advice, and at the desire of the Clergy of Connecticut, We, the Bishop, do by these presents forbid, and direct the Clergy of this Diocese to forbid the said Rogers in future to officiate in their churches and within their parishes, and in all vacant parishes the wardens are desired to do the same, and the congregations are exhorted not to give countenance to a man whose disorderly and refractory conduct is subversive of the harmony and peace of the Church."

Rogers published an immediate response to this circular, and declared it to be without authority and of no force. His numerous adherents, in the parishes where he had been employed, also issued their solemn protest—instigated and prepared no doubt by himself—against the circular of the Bishop, but the clergy stood firmly by their chief pastor and sustained him in the act which had been performed in obedience to their request. They addressed a letter to the Standing Committee of New York, reciting generally the course of Rogers in Connecticut and enclosing a copy of his "Anti-circular" with a request that it might be laid before their Diocesan, adding, "we wish not in this communication to go into a particular detail of the many irregularities which he has been guilty of since he has been in this State. We judge his circular letter will be sufficient data for some official measures to be taken respecting him." By this time he had removed from his native place and become the accepted minister in the more ancient and wealthy parish at Stamford. Here he was quite popular, and the influence which he acquired over his supporters emboldened him to take other steps to vindicate his character and standing in the Church.

The General Convention met in the city of New York, September 1804, and confident of success, he carried his case before the House of Bishops, and invoked their interposition. That House was then composed of White, Claggett, Jarvis, Benjamin Moore,

and Parker—the latter of whom was consecrated to the Apostolic office on the fourth day of the session, and the "memorial of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, accompanied with sundry documents and a letter" was introduced on the same day. A time was fixed for hearing the case, and the desire of the Bishops was communicated to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, that, if any members of that body "possessed information respecting the conduct of the said Ammi Rogers in the matters brought before them," they would appear at the specified time and produce the information. Bishop Jarvis, from motives of delicacy, absented himself when the question came up, but the clerical delegates from Connecticut appeared and the memorialist was called in, and documents on both sides were then read and a hearing was granted. Nothing was done afterwards in the business except in the presence of the parties concerned. "The clerical deputies from Connecticut," says Bishop White, "while they treated the man with the utmost decorum, produced ample evidence of a factious and mischievous disposition."

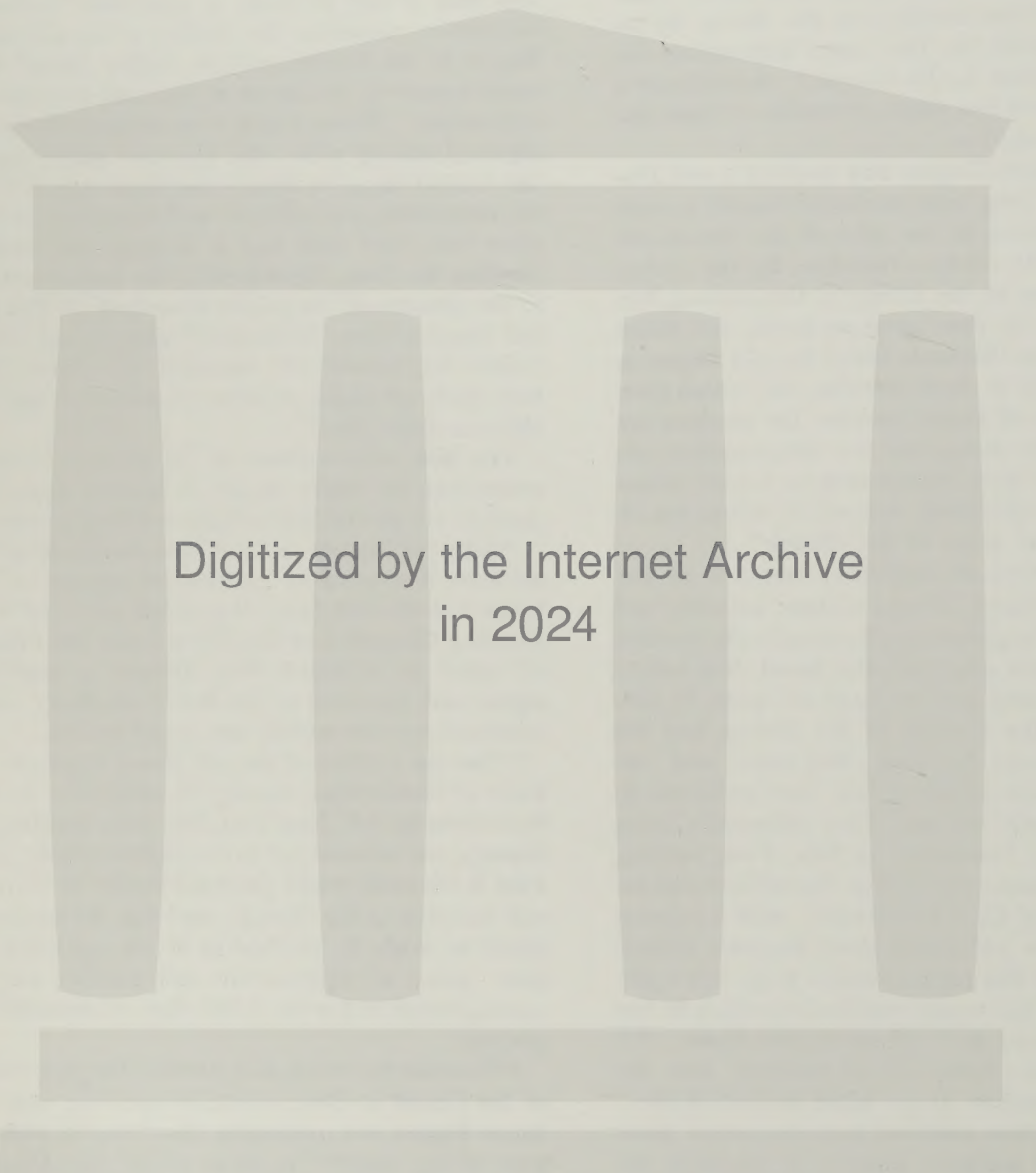
The final determination of the House of Bishops concerning the whole subject is entered upon their journal and quoted here without omitting a word.

"After full inquiry and fair examination of all the evidence that could be procured, it appears to this house that the said Ammi Rogers had produced to the Standing Committee of New York (upon the strength of which he obtained Holy Orders) a certificate signed with the name of the Rev. Philo Perry, which certificate was not written nor signed by him.

"That the conduct of the said Ammi Rogers, in the State of Connecticut, during his residence in that State since he left New York, has been insulting, refractory, and schismatical in the highest degree; and, were it tolerated, would prove subversive of all order and discipline in the Church; and that the statement which he made in justification of his conduct, was a mere tissue of equivocation and evasion, and, of course, served rather to defeat than to establish his purpose.

"Therefore this house do approve of the proceedings of the Church in Connecticut, in reproofing the said Ammi Rogers, and prohibiting him from the performance of any ministerial duties within that Diocese; and, moreover, are of opinion that he deserves a severe ecclesiastical censure—that of degradation from the ministry.

"In regard to the question, To what authority is Mr. Rogers amenable? this house are sensible, that there not having been, previously to the present Convention, any sufficient provision for a case of a clergyman removing from one diocese to another, it might easily happen that different sentiments would arise as to this point. We are of opinion, that Mr.



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Rogers's residence being in Connecticut, it is to the authority of that diocese he is exclusively amenable. But as the imposition practiced with a view to the Ministry was in New York, we recommend to the Bishop and Standing Committee of that State, to send to the Bishop in Connecticut such documents, duly attested, of the measure referred to, as will be a ground of procedure in that particular.

"We further direct the Secretary to deliver a copy of the above to the clerical deputies from Connecticut, and another copy to the Rev. Ammi Rogers. And we further direct that either of the aforesaid parties be permitted to have any document respectively delivered in by them, a copy of it being first taken; except the petition and affidavit of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, of which he may have a copy if desired—as may either of the parties have of any document delivered by the other party."

This decision, embracing the opinion of the bishops on all the points contained in the memorial, was not entirely free from canonical difficulties. It sent the petitioner back to Connecticut under a sentence of condemnation by the very body from which he had sought redress; and hence the impression was produced that Ammi Rogers had been tried by the House of Bishops and that nothing remained but to declare him degraded. The whole proceeding was somewhat loose and irregular. Bishop White thought that in giving an opinion, the House should have stopped with an incidental notice of "the iniquity which had come within their knowledge," during the investigation. "But unfortunately," he continued, "one of the bishops having proposed that there should be included a recommendation to degrade the man from the Ministry, the others, under the sensibility excited by the evidence of his great unworthiness and his flagitious conduct, consented to the proposal. This was ill-judged." It seemed to close the case to further scrutiny, and furnished the Bishop and clergy of Connecticut with a reason for their subsequent action.

The mode of trying a clergyman in this Diocese at that time was prescribed by a Canon, which required the accusers of an offending minister to make written application in the first instance to the Standing Committee, and if it appeared to them that there was ground for the charges, they should report thereupon to the bishop, who was then to call a convention of his clergy—not less than seven—and after a full and fair trial and examination he, with the advice of those present, should pronounce sentence against the guilty party. Rogers complained that in his case the provisions of the Canon were not regarded; and, technically speaking, there was room for complaint, unless the hearing, which he had himself invited, is to be understood in the light of a trial before a higher

court. It was so understood by Bishop Claggett, whose ill-health compelled him to leave the city and return home before the business was finished or rather before any judgment had been delivered. Others could not refrain from taking the same view; especially as witnesses were called, testimony heard, and an authoritative decision rendered.

"The ground on which the Bishops consented to give their sentiments on the question, as to the jurisdiction to which Ammi Rogers belonged, was," says White "in the urgent solicitations of both the parties; which were thought to justify the expression of opinion." His amenability to the Diocese of Connecticut having been affirmed, a Convocation was held in Cheshire on the 3d day of October,—two weeks after the adjournment of the General Convention,—when the Bishop and ten presbyters were present. No allusion to the episcopal decision appears upon the records of that meeting, but simply this entry: "Bishop Jarvis presented a sentence of degradation against the Rev. Ammi Rogers, which was unanimously approved and the same ordered to be published in the usual form," an order which was, of course, immediately obeyed. A terrible storm now arose and threatened to be followed by serious consequences to the Church in Connecticut. The friends of the degraded minister rallied around him with increased earnestness and the congregation of St. John's Church in Stamford, for which he had been hired on the previous Easter Monday to officiate six months, held a meeting, and by a major vote called and settled him as their Rector, and stipulated to pay him annually a definite sum during his natural life, "any order, determination, or decree of the Bishop and clergy of this or any other State to the contrary notwithstanding." The minority, who endeavored in vain to get the Bishop's circular and documents from the General Convention read, remonstrated against this proceeding, and claimed that those who instituted it had forfeited their right to be the representatives of the parish and the guardians of its interests. Internal troubles followed, and suits at law were commenced against Rogers to eject him from the incumbency on the ground that he was a trespasser, and in the trial of these suits came up the question of his displacement from the ministry in due and canonical form. The courts decided virtually in his favor, and held that the papers issued and published by Bishop Jarvis concerning him were not, in themselves, sufficient to deprive him of his standing in the Church, and consequently of his living amongst those who had accepted him as their lawful and settled minister. The points of law turned upon the nature of the Episcopal office, and the interpretation of the Canons which prescribed the mode of trying a clergyman in Connecticut. Disorderly and schismatical conduct,

unbecoming a priest of God, and subversive of the peace and harmony of the Church, was not the issue before the civil court, but it was whether the man, with this particular sentence of degradation pronounced upon him, had the same clerical rights as before.

The Bishop with his clergy met in Convocation at Stamford on the 14th day of October, 1805, when besides himself thirteen were present, including two visiting brethren from New York. The object of the meeting was to confer, in a friendly and unofficial way, with the principal adherents of Rogers; and as soon as they had organized for business a committee was appointed to wait upon Mr. Cary Leeds, one of their number and their authorized "agent to negotiate a settlement of all the unhappy differences and disputes," and inform him that the Convocation was now ready to enter into a conference with him respecting those ecclesiastical proceedings of the Diocese which were so unsatisfactory to him and his friends. The answer brought back by the committee was—"That Mr. Leeds informed them that he could have no personal conference with the Convocation." The Bishop had previously made a gentle requisition upon him for the keys of St. John's Church, that it might be used for the meetings of the clergy while in town; and had told him that "his compliance in this particular would be in strict conformity to ecclesiastical duty." But the keys had been given up to the exclusive control of Rogers, and to him therefore a more peremptory requisition was sent, but without avail. Several letters or notes passed between the parties, and finally the "Rev. Philo Shelton, Rev. Daniel Burhans and Rev. Tillotson Bronson were appointed a committee to draft an answer to the last communication from Cary Leeds to this Convocation;" and they submitted the following statement, which was approved unanimously and ordered to be engrossed upon the minutes.

"To Cary Leeds, Alexander Bishop and others who are dissatisfied with the ecclesiastical proceedings of the Bishop and clergy of the Diocese of Connecticut in regard to Mr. Ammi Rogers:—

"The Bishop and clergy of the Diocese of Connecticut, sincerely desirous to promote the peace and preserve the authority of the Church, have met at Stamford in the hope that, by friendly conference with you, it would be in their power to satisfy you of the propriety and duty of submitting to the sentence pronounced upon Mr. Ammi Rogers. They regret that your refusal to engage in a personal conference has prevented that full and fair discussion of the subject which in every point of view was so desirable. By persons who profess themselves churchmen in principles and in practice, they still cherish the hope that the following statement of facts from the authority of the Church will be duly regarded."

They then proceed to give a minute history of the hearing before the House of Bishops and to call attention to every step taken in that body with reference to this matter. Their answer next goes on to say:—

"By recurring to the Journal, you will find that the above is an impartial statement of facts, and that the following particulars undeniably result from it. Mr. Ammi Rogers brought this business himself before the House of Bishops, and, in the words of his memorial, declared that 'he has never shunned investigation, but on the contrary has always requested it, and *now* prays that a candid and impartial inquiry may be made as to his conduct and character.' It appears that Mr. Rogers presented to the House his documents; and that a full hearing of the case was at different times made in the presence of both parties; that Mr. Rogers confirmed the wish that he expressed for an inquiry by always attending for the purpose, and it was not until the close of the inquiry, and until he had reason to fear the unfavorable result to himself that he expressed to the Bishops that he did not wish them to come to any decision. Now as persons deeply interested for the peace of the Church and your spiritual welfare, we entreat your conscientious attention to the following considerations. Can you suppose, that, if Mr. Rogers did not wish for an inquiry into his conduct by the House of Bishops, he would have permitted them to engage in it, without entering his solemn protest against it? Can you suppose that the Right Rev. Bishop White, whose impartiality and mildness are so universally acknowledged,—that Bishop Moore, who had been represented by Mr. Rogers as friendly to him,—that Bishop Parker, who had just made his solemn vows at the altar, would have forced Mr. Rogers to an inquiry if he had not solicited it;—would declare that they had made a full inquiry and fair examination of the subject, if such inquiry and examination had not been made? Can you suppose that these venerable Bishops of the Church would have violated every obligation of truth and justice as well as the most solemn vows of office by condemning an innocent man? Could Mr. Rogers have had a trial before a more impartial tribunal? Or can you suppose that, after the House of Bishops had made a full inquiry and pronounced their opinion, anything else was left to the Bishop of Connecticut than to carry their decision into effect? Mr. Rogers made an appeal to the House of Bishops. They thought proper to investigate his conduct and pronounce a decision. The Canons of the Church of Connecticut in regard to the trial of clergymen could here have no operation. The Bishop of Connecticut was the agent to carry the decision of the House of Bishops into effect. Mr. Rogers has been solemnly degraded from the ministry after a full investigation of his conduct, and a discus-

sion in regard to him by the highest authority in the Church. We entreat you by your character as churchmen, by the memory of your forefathers who cherished the Church with inviolable fidelity;—we entreat you by the prospect of that awful tribunal at which all mankind must be judged, to regard the Divine injunction, ‘Hear the Church.’ In the language of the Apostle, we exhort you, brethren, ‘Put from you that unworthy person.’ Remember the injunction of our Lord: ‘If any man refuse to hear the Church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.’ In the spirit of meekness and affection, we entreat you. Rend not that Divine body, the Church which your Redeemer purchased with his blood. For ourselves we most solemnly declare, that mindful of the commission given to us by our Divine Master and relying on his promise, that He will be with His Church always, even to the end of the world, we shall esteem it our sacred duty to preserve inviolate the authority committed to us: and we trust that what is thus done by the lawful governors of the Church on earth, will be ratified in heaven.”¹

A copy of the foregoing document, signed by Mr. Bronson as chairman of the Committee, was delivered to Mr. Leeds and a resolution of the Convocation next morning shows the manner of its reception, and the extent to which the misguided adherents of Rogers had allowed their passions to run. The resolution was,—“That Mr. Cary Leeds be informed that the Convocation have received his communication of October 16th, accompanied with a certain vote of a meeting held at St. John’s Church in Stamford on the 27th day of May, 1805, attested by Isaac Holly, Jr., by which they have declared that they are not under the direction, nor amenable to the authority, of any bishop. This Convocation have therefore no further communication to make to Mr. Leeds on this subject.”

Here was a step in the direction of actual schism. It was breaking away from the counsels which ought to have been heeded, and rashly setting aside the order and polity of the Church. No parish pursuing such a course could expect to be represented in the Diocesan Convention, and it was not surprising, therefore, that a vote was afterwards passed in that body, excluding a lay representation from those “who should employ any person to officiate among them, who had been suspended or degraded from his clerical office.” This action might have been regarded, for a time, with indifference by the friends of Rogers; but in the end, even supposing the sentence of the ecclesiastical authority against him premature, it would operate to their disadvantage and put them in the wrong for rejecting wholly the discipline of a kingdom which is not of this world. “Religion”

says Dr. Chandler, “being a matter of free choice, for which we are ordinarily accountable to Him only who will hereafter judge us for our moral behavior; and the Church, considered with relation to civil power, being, in the very nature of it, a voluntary society; it is left to men’s consciences to determine whether they will become members of it or not. But after they have become members, the laws of the Church are in force against them, and they are subject, in ecclesiastical matters, to the authority of those who govern it.” Principles cannot be made false by mistakes or oversights, nor does the mere use of the Book of Common Prayer constitute a man an Episcopalian. He must love and honor the teachings of his communion and recognize the authority of a bishop—of a bishop, too, who has a canonical claim to his allegiance.

A. D. 1805–1809.

At this adjourned Convention in Newtown, an effort was again made to reopen the case of Ammi Rogers, and John Nichols, a lay delegate from Waterbury, introduced a resolution requesting the Bishop to revoke his sentence of degradation and leave the offender “to be proceeded against agreeably to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.” The Convention decided that it was not competent to judge respecting the sentence, and after its final adjournment the Bishop and clergy met in Convocation and declared “that in their opinion the only proper board for redress of grievances complained of by said Rogers in consequence of his suspension and degradation” was the House of Bishops, to whose decision they expressed themselves ever ready to submit. Through a committee they also prepared a letter, which they directed to be signed by the Secretary and transmitted to the several bishops who were present at the last General Convention. The letter is given here in full, for it shows their desire to bring this troublesome business to an end in any way that would preserve “the honor of God’s Church,” and further “the prosperity of true religion.”

“RIGHT REV. SIR: The Bishop of Connecticut, with the advice of his presbyters in Convocation assembled at Cheshire in the month of October of the year 1804, passed sentence of degradation against Mr. Ammi Rogers. In taking this step, the Bishop conceived himself warranted by the proceedings had with regard to the said Mr. Rogers before the House of Bishops at New York. This opinion was formed on the consideration of the full and solemn hearings that were given to Mr. Rogers and the delegation from Connecticut, and on the conceived impropriety of again calling in question facts which the highest ecclesiastical authority in our Church had said were

¹ MS. Records of Convocation.

proved. Having nothing in view, as is hoped and believed, but the honor of God's Church and the prosperity of true religion, it is found with regret that a different opinion has been expressed by two of the members of the House of Bishops, in their affidavits given to Mr. Rogers; which has exposed the Church in Connecticut to much inconvenience and trouble, and the dangers of an unhappy schism are greatly increased by the efforts now carried on by the said Rogers and his adherents.

"If these evils are to be ascribed to the governors of the Church in Connecticut in consequence of their erroneous conclusions from what was done at New York, they flatter themselves that it was the error of the head and not of the heart. But however this may be, they stand ready to be corrected by the competent authority. And being disposed to do everything in their power for the peace of the Church, they do hereby request that you will, in conjunction with the other bishops concerned, transmit a statement of your view of the whole subject, together with your advice to Connecticut how it would be prudent in the present state of things to proceed; and particularly whether it would be advisable to give Mr. Rogers a new trial on the ground of nullity in the act of degradation.

"Your advice on this, or any other point that may tend to remove the unhappy embarrassments under which the Church is laboring, will be thankfully received and seriously weighed and considered."

Answers to this letter from the three bishops to whom it was severally addressed were read to the Convocation which met at Watertown on the second day of June, 1807. Bishop White, in his "Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church,"² has a note in reference to the Clergy of Connecticut desiring advice on the question of again taking up the case of Ammi Rogers and granting him a new trial. Both he and Bishop Moore were in favor of the measure; "but," he adds rather sharply, "it did not take place. It would have been more discreet in them to have withheld their advice, until they should have known that it would have effect." Bishop Claggett, who went very extensively into the merits of the sentence of degradation and recited the history of the action which led to it, differed in opinion from those two prelates, and thought that nothing but reordination could "restore Mr. Rogers to his former standing in the Christian ministry." His letter,¹ which is too long to be inserted in this place, undoubtedly had its influence in preventing the Bishop and clergy of Connecticut from pronouncing their own degradation a nullity.

The excitement produced by his imaginary wrongs was meat and drink to Rogers, and he poured his complaints into the ears not only of those who sym-

pathized with him, but of all who were disposed to listen. For many years, hardly a convention or convocation in the Diocese was held that he did not flood with his papers or visit with his importunities. He had his friends to bolster up his cause, and afford him a medium through which to operate, and hence Bishop Jarvis, in his address to the Annual Convention of 1807,—which was the first address ever printed in the Journal,—called attention to the office of the Episcopate and earnestly rebuked any disregard of its rights and powers.

"The firm belief," said he, "that ecclesiastical authority, in its fullest extent, was essential not only to the well ordering, but even to the very being of the Church in this country, caused our predecessors to plead so strongly as they did for the obtaining of it. From their public communications, we learn what evils they expected would be remedied, and what benefits would be enjoyed, by having resident bishops in the American Church. One particular advantage, preëminently conducive, in their opinion, to its welfare and reputation, would be the complete information which the bishop could obtain, or the personal knowledge he would have of those who should be presented to him for ordination; and thereby the greater security would be established that no disqualified or unworthy persons would get admission into the ministry. But in case such instances should happen and the Church should suffer scandal, the bishop would be at hand, to correct, to suspend, and, if necessary, to silence, to depose from their office, and even to excommunicate from the society of Christians, the vicious and incorrigible.

"I ask, then, gentlemen, whether the Episcopate in possession be considered as holding primitive powers; and whether it be now viewed in the same light in which they viewed it, who contended so long and so earnestly to procure its establishment among us? Is it found to be a remedy for the evils complained of, and does it experimentally yield to the Church that good which was expected? During the time in which our Church was destitute of resident bishops, there were among the clergy men of acknowledged abilities, and of characters approved for their activity, learning, and piety. How watchful were the endeavors of these clergymen may be easily imagined; and yet by them we have it asserted, as one of the evils for which they solicited the Episcopate as a redress, that vicious men from this country, by means of testimonials, either forged or obtained, God knows how, procured ordination in England; and after having been invested with the sacred office, had been sent back to take charge of the souls of others—in the prosecution of which work they acted as if they had not or imagined that they had not any souls of their own.

"Are we not compelled to own that the same fact has taken place since bishops have been present

¹ MS. Records of Convocation.

² P. 180

³ Appendix A.

among us? After a solemn investigation, full proof of fact, and actual deposition from office, have not numbers arisen to support the degraded person, even while he continues to minister, in defiance of the authority which has stripped him of all right so to do? By this contumelious and ruinous procedure, a schism commenced, the future extent and continuation of which is indeed uncertain; but most certain has been the contempt shown to ecclesiastical authority. The false tongue of the transgressor has found listening ears, and minds disposed to credit his tales, and to associate with him in the work of mischief. By them the bishop's character has been loaded with obloquy and reproach, and Korah (though thus to use the name is degrading even to Korah), in the eye of his company, has become the saint and the bishop the sinner.

"Repeated efforts to bring this subject before the Convention, though every attempt to do it was, in my apprehension, a fresh outrage upon the order and authority of the Church, is the cause of my speaking in this manner. Had circumstances been such as would have directed me to call your attention to the ordinary concerns only of the Church, according to her well known rules, and sound doctrines, it would have been far, far more congenial with my wishes."

Failing in all his attempts to be recognized and restored, and furnishing, as an eminent lawyer of that time said, an example of the triumph of justice over law, Rogers again ventured to carry his case before the House of Bishops in the shape of an appeal from the sentence of degradation under which he lay. Two bishops only — White and Claggett — were present at the General Convention which met in the city of Baltimore, May, 1808, and on the fourth day of the session, the "documents signed Ammi Rogers," accompanied by a letter from his counsel, were under consideration; and in the final decision¹ which was rendered, the House both confirmed its previous action and refused to interfere with the proceedings of the Bishop and clergy of Connecticut. Not satisfied with this decision, he sent in, on a subsequent day, "certain petitions addressed to the General Convention," but as the resolution had been taken by the Bishops to dismiss the subject of his case finally from consideration, they passed them, without opening, to the House of Clerical and Lay Delegates, where the action upon them was equally summary and decisive.

Soon after this, Rogers left Connecticut and removed to New York, locating himself in the neighborhood of his earliest ministrations. While there he brought a suit against Bishop Jarvis for slander before the Circuit Court of the United States, to be holden at New Haven, April, 1811, claiming damages in the sum of twenty thousand dollars. The Convention of

the Diocese appointed a committee of laymen to employ legal counsel to defend in the suit thus instituted, and great pains were taken to collect testimony to rebut his witnesses and establish the righteousness of his degradation from the ministry. Declining to appear when the case was called, he was non-suited, and "the Court considered that Bishop Jarvis should recover against him \$316.24 — cost and charges laid out by him for his defence" — and accordingly he had execution for that amount.¹

But the anger of this degraded priest was not yet burnt out, and Bishop Jarvis going afterwards to the City of New York to assist in the consecration of Griswold and Hobart, was sued by him before the Supreme Court of that State and damages once more laid at twenty thousand dollars for issuing papers against him without authority, breaking up his settlements, and causing distress and trouble to himself and family. The suit was pending when death came to the Bishop and terminated all further proceedings. He had been, in a measure, unable to silence the discontents which sprang up in certain quarters from the operation of what he conscientiously believed to be the exercise of his Episcopal duty. The disturbance of the Diocese was to him, with his infirmities, a personal trouble, and this wretched business for years gave him no peace. Perpetually recurring in different forms, and sometimes instigated or encouraged by those who undoubtedly had the welfare of the Church at heart, it was the one great trial of his Episcopate and shaded with oppressive sorrow his latest days.

The General Convention which met at Baltimore in 1808 was composed of two bishops, fourteen clergymen, and thirteen lay delegates. Seven States were represented; among them, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Bishop Jarvis was prevented by the state of his health from attempting the journey, but two clerical and two lay delegates were present from this Diocese, and bore a conspicuous part in the deliberations of that body. Though thinly attended it was an important meeting. For then all the Canons were revised, thirty new hymns adopted, certain resolutions in regard to duels and divorces passed, and a committee appointed to make a solemn and affectionate address to all the dioceses and urge upon them "the propriety, necessity and duty of sending regularly a deputation to the General Convention." A pastoral letter from the House of Bishops, prepared in compliance with a Canon enacted in 1804, was now for the first time issued, and efforts were put forth to secure in future fuller statistics and a more accurate and general view of the state of the Church throughout the country. The pastoral letter touched upon doctrine, worship, discipline, and the end of all, a holy

¹ Appendix B.

¹ Records of Circuit Court, New Haven, 1811.

life and conversation. The part relating to discipline opened with this paragraph: "And here we wish our clerical and our lay brethren to be aware, as, on one hand, of the responsibility under which we lie; so, on the other, of the caution which justice and impartiality require. The Church has made provision for the degradation of unworthy clergymen. It is for us to suppose that there are none of that description, until the contrary is made known to us in our respective places, in the manner which the Canons have prescribed: and if the contrary to what we wish is, in any instance, to be found, it lies on you, our clerical and lay brethren, to present such faulty conduct; although with due regard to proof; and, above all, in a temper which shows the impelling motive to be the glory of God, and the sanctity of the reputation of his Church."

A score of parishes in the Diocese still believed in the sincerity and holiness of Ammi Rogers. He himself may have hoped that, with the death of Bishop Jarvis, the power of his opponents would be broken, and that he could gain a standing among the clergy, which would, in some measure, relieve him from the odium attached to his character. He appeared at the Annual Convention in 1815 with delegates from Hebron and Groton, who were admitted to seats by courtesy, and in consideration that the parishes which they represented had not hitherto been correctly informed relative to the true state of the case; but the personal petition of Rogers was returned to him with the same resolution of the clergy, heretofore repeatedly adopted, that they were "not competent to take cognizance of said petition." He persisted in his attempts to be recognized, and when Bishop Hobart assumed the charge of the Diocese, he wrote him a plausible letter, reciting the history of his ministerial life, and complaining that he was unjustly deprived of his rights and privileges, having never, as he affirmed, "been canonically censured, suspended, silenced or degraded." Such men always gather around them groups of friends and supporters, and at this time, Rogers was travelling to and fro in the northeastern section of the State, preaching and performing service according to the ritual of the Church in nine different parishes, so called — seven of which were purely the result of his officious schemes, and unknown on the journals of the Convention.

Bishop Hobart, while unwilling to countenance these irregular ministrations, or to pronounce upon the canonical steps of his predecessor, was yet desirous of doing his duty to the people of Hebron and other places, and accordingly, about the time of publishing his appointments for that part of the Diocese, he requested the Rev. Solomon Blakeslee, then Rector of the Church at New London, to undertake a mission for him to these places, to hold public services in them, and, if he deemed it expedient, to prepare the way for an Episcopal visitation. Mr. Blakeslee was

one of those clergymen who had befriended Rogers, and gravely doubted the correctness of the sentence of degradation issued against him, and when he started upon his journey, he was quite willing to take him into his company, and thus the better side of things was presented to his view, for not only did "genteel families" strengthen the impressions he had entertained of the character of the man and his work, but agreeable incidents marked his progress, and "every toil," to quote his own words, was "sweetened with an endearing recollection."

On completing his missionary tour, Mr. Blakeslee communicated the results of his observation to Bishop Hobart in a long letter, from which a brief extract here will be sufficient. "I have already stated," said he, "that these churches have been reared into life by the care and industry of Mr. Rogers, and to speak with caution, they embrace a number of not less than two thousand souls; many of them have received baptism at his hands, have come to the holy communion through his persuasion and influence, and now wait with a hope and expectation of being presented by their own minister to the Bishop, that they may receive the apostolic rite of confirmation. This is the only point which involves in it any delicacy. . . .

"I should be pleased to accompany the Bishop in his visitation of the Church in Hebron, Jewett City, and Poquetannock (three only of the nine parishes which I visited have churches), should the Bishop be satisfied that it would be consistent with his duty to acknowledge Mr. Rogers' administrations, and to receive from him, as the curate, the subjects of confirmation, and to communicate with him in the offices of the Church; otherwise I do not consider it prudent to hold myself responsible for any consequences that may grow out of your sincere wishes to serve them."¹

The parishes at Hebron and Poquetannock or Groton, were organized before the Revolution, and the Bishop had included them in his appointments. He travelled upon this visitation in his own carriage, and on the morning of the 20th of August, he was at Marlborough, a town adjoining Hebron, holding a service and administering the rite of confirmation. He had decided that a compliance with the terms stated by Mr. Blakeslee would be an interference on his part with the official acts of Bishop Jarvis, and the news of his intention not to fulfill his appointment reached Hebron in time to take the wardens of the parish and Dr. John S. Peters to Marlborough, to confer with him and make some arrangement whereby the church might be visited and the expectations of the people gratified. It was to no purpose that Rogers accompanied these gentlemen, for the Bishop would neither see him nor listen to any proposal in which he might be supposed to have a share. But he finally consented to visit Hebron, if the wardens

¹ Life of Rogers, pp. 61-62.

would give him a written certificate to the effect that in doing so, they would understand that he was to have no intercourse with this man as a pastor, nor recognize him in any way as a clergyman of the Church. They gave him such a paper, drawn up in language to suit his own feelings, and with it he set forth on the road to Hebron. Upon reaching the door of the church and alighting from his carriage, who should come out to welcome him amid a crowd of spectators, but Rogers himself in full canonicals! The Bishop turned without speaking to him, reëntered his carriage, drove to the public house, and after partaking of some refreshments departed from the town, to the great disappointment and grief of the assembled people, and to the mortification of those who, if they could not control Rogers by their agreement, should at least have ascertained the fact soon enough to save themselves from the appearance of imposing upon a dignified and courteous prelate, yielding to their special request in the matter of a religious service.

The end of this long and unhappy trouble was now approaching. The friends of the degraded priest rallied around him in vain, multiplying their testimonials and redoubling their efforts to vindicate his character. He sought once more to be accepted as a clergyman in the Diocese, and for this purpose transmitted a letter of his own, with sundry documents from his supporters, to the Annual Convention of 1818; but no action was taken upon these communications and none was needed, for his case, instead of presenting any new claims for consideration, had, by this time, assumed a sadder aspect. The current of public opinion was bearing him down to depths from which he could never rise, except by the grace and favor of God. He was accused of the most heinous offences, even of crimes committed with a young woman, and arraigned by the State before the Supreme Court of New London County. After a protracted trial, he was found guilty of the charges, brought against him, and sentenced to imprisonment in the common jail at Norwich for two years; the Judge, in mercy to his children, withholding a severer punishment.

From the chamber of his prison he wrote to the Governor of the State, and also memorialized the General Assembly, asking the one to grant him a reprieve as the law permitted, and the other to take his case into consideration and release him from confinement, or allow him a new trial before what he called "an impartial and unprejudiced tribunal." The principal witnesses whose testimony had supported the prosecution were produced at the hearing before the joint committee of the General Assembly, and declared under oath that their former statements were false, and that they had been persuaded to make them, contrary to their inclinations, by those who were concerned in framing the indictment. This contradiction was un-

doubtedly instigated by the memorialist and his friends. But the perjured witnesses did not avail him, for upon an unfavorable report from the committee, the Legislature declined to rejudge a matter already decided by the proper tribunal. Rogers therefore served out the sentence of the Court, and afterwards published, in a small volume, the "Memoirs" of himself—a bad book, which bears abundant evidence of an insolent and self-righteous spirit, and a corrupt and wicked heart. He went through the country, selling his "Memoirs," and preaching wherever he could gather an audience; but his old adherents now received him with distrust or began to recoil from him, and he gained not even a temporary settlement in any duly constituted parish of the Diocese. His powers to excite an interest in his behalf were at an end. The congregations, which he organized before his imprisonment, broke up, and when he searched for his numerous flocks they were nowhere to be found. He was a pestilent historic character, who was permitted, in the providence of God, to trouble the Church and society for half a century, and died at Ballston, N. Y., in 1852, showing no signs of having "truly and earnestly repented him of his sins," and fighting to the last his sentence of degradation from the ministry.

APPENDIX A.

THE following letter was addressed to the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, Stratford, Ct. :—

"CROOM, 12th January, 1807.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR, — I had the honor to receive a letter from the Reverend Convocation of the Diocese of Connecticut, together with a resolve of that body, requesting you as their Secretary, to forward a similar one to all the bishops who sat in the last General Convention of our Church. This letter I received about three months ago, and for reasons which will appear below, I have hitherto declined answering it. In their letter the Convocation inform me of the step the Convocation of the Church of Connecticut had in the year 1804 thought themselves authorized to take in Mr. Rogers's unhappy affair, in consequence of its being referred to them by the House of Bishops, of their reasons for taking that step, and the consequent misunderstanding that had arisen between them and two of the House of Bishops on the subject, by which a great danger of a schism in the flourishing Church of Connecticut had arisen. They go on to profess the purity of their intentions in that transaction, and in the true spirit of the Gospel, their hearty desire to do everything in their power for the peace and prosperity of the Church, and conclude their letter by requesting that I, in conjunction with the other bishops, concerned in that business, would as soon as convenient transmit a statement of our view of the whole subject, together with our advice to Connecticut, how it would be prudent in the present state of things to proceed, and particularly, whether it would be advisable to give Mr. Rogers a new trial on the ground of nullity in the Act of Degradation.

"For reasons which will presently appear, however desirous I may be, it is impossible that I should at present, with my stock of information on the subject, comply with this request. However, I think it my duty to state to you the view I myself had of the cause, and the part I took in it. You will recollect, my dear sir, the very ill state of health I was in during the whole session of that Convention. Notwithstanding which, as I conceived Mr. Rogers's appeal to be amongst the most important affairs which the House of Bishops had to transact, I attended closely to it, and endeavored

to view it in all its bearings. On the last day of the session of Convention, just before its adjournment, the deputies from the Church of Connecticut, and Mr. Rogers, were desired to retire out of the House of Bishops, when, according to the best of my recollection, every bishop present, except Bishop Jarvis (who I presume, thought himself too much implicated to give any opinion), expressed a decided conviction of his guilt, and I then thought nothing remained to be done but to award the sentence denounced by our Canon law against such criminals. But in this particular I was mistaken; for I was invited to dine in the evening of that day in which Convention adjourned, together with the rest of my Rt. Rev. Brethren, with the Rt. Rev. Bishop Moore, and told that Mr. Rogers's business would be then and there finished. In the course of the morning, I was informed by some clergyman (I have forgotten whom), that it was the wish of some of the bishops to have the cause referred back to some of the State Conventions. This gave me some uneasiness, for my illness having increased, I had determined to return by the first opportunity, and before the meeting at Dr. Moore's. Thus circumstanced, I sent for my Rt. Rev. Brother Dr. Parker, to my friend Dr. Beach's, where I lodged, took him into a private room, and informed him of my situation, and of my intention to leave town immediately, and also of what I had heard concerning the wish of some of the bishops, respecting Rogers's cause. I told him that I was pointedly against the adoption of such a measure for the following reasons. Because, as I understood the matter, Mr. Rogers did not hold himself amenable to the Church, either of Connecticut or New York, and had on that ground appealed from the prosecution commenced against him by the Church of Connecticut, to our House, so that the cause appeared to me to come very properly before us, and that it did appear to me also after what had passed in our House in it, that we could not possibly refer it to any earthly tribunal whatever, without derogating from that authority given by the great Head of His Church to His Apostles *collectively*, and through them to their successors in office to the end of the world, when He delivered to St. Peter the keys of the Church, which authority I conceive was by his appointment paramount to that of any *single* Bishop or Church in our Union, and therefore, in cases of this sort, especially, not transferable by them to any earthly tribunal. I added, that if it should appear that a majority of the House of Bishops was determined to refer this cause to some State Convention, I hoped they would not refer it to the Church of Connecticut, as I was persuaded that such a measure would have a direct tendency to make the confusion already occasioned by it in that flourishing Church still more confused, and endanger a schism.

"In these sentiments Bishop Parker appeared at the time to coincide with me, and I concluded the conversation by requesting him to set my name to the act, if the bishops should determine to do the only thing in my opinion remaining to be done, namely, to award the sentence against Mr. Rogers, required by our Canon law; but if a reference to any Convention, or any other half-way measure was adopted, not to put my name to the deed, as I was *ex animo* against them all. The good Bishop promised to conform to the premises, and I have not had any information since on the subject, excepting what has been afforded me by the journals of the last General Convention, and the letter of your Convocation. I did think it possible, that in consequence of the resolution of your Convocation lately sent me, some of my Right Reverend friends might have stated to me by letter their motives for referring this cause, as also their intentions with respect to the powers to be vested in your Convention by the act of Reference, and this circumstance delayed my answer to the Convocation.

"All expectations of information on the subject sufficient to enable me, *conjointly* with the other bishops concerned, to give any further statement of that unhappy business, being now at an end, I have thought it my duty, by way of apology to your Convocation, to make this candid communication of the subject to you, and through you to them.

"The conversation with Bishop Parker above cited, contains the

substance of my sentiments on the subject at the time, and with great deference to the opinion of the three learned prelates, who finally determined the matter in the House of Bishops, I have seen nothing as yet to induce me to alter them. There is a wide difference to be sure between us; but this difference may be accounted for by supposing, what their *determination*, as they call it, would lead us to suppose, that a Canon of the General Convention was necessary to clothe them with authority in this case, which I did and do suppose Christ himself gave them independently of any lay or clerical authority whatever.

"As for advice, my dear sir, insulated as I am from all intercourse with my Rt. Rev. Brethren, placed in a corner of the country where I can seldom, except at church meetings and visitations, see my own presbyters, and at the same time, in an ill state of health, I should consider it a high degree of presumption to offer it *individually* to the good Bishop of your Church, aided as he is by his truly pious and learned presbyters. However, my solicitude for the preservation of the ancient principles of the Church, impels me to hint a wish that your Bishop and learned presbyters would make a solemn pause, and well weigh the consequences to the Church of Christ before they suffer themselves to be induced to pronounce their own degradation a nullity, for I think it may well be questioned, whether they or any other power upon earth, in cases of this sort, are competent to such an act. Mr. Rogers, indeed, upon his true repentance, might be loosed from those sins which occasioned his degradation, but nothing but reordination can, in my judgment, restore him to his former standing in the Christian ministry. In this sentiment, I think I am supported, not only by the nature of the commission given to the Church by Christ, to bind and loose, but also by the practice of the Primitive Church. Sure I am, that such a step, was it to be taken by your Convention at this time, and in this country, when and where the minds of men on the subject of Church discipline are so very unsettled, and tremblingly alive to what they call Liberty, would militate strongly against all ecclesiastical authority whatever, so necessary to the well-being of the Church of Christ upon earth.

"If this unhappy business cannot be amicably settled before in some other way, rather than thus endanger so important a pillar in our venerable spiritual edifice founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, I should think that your Convention had much better abide by the consequences, until the meeting of our next General Convention, when they may avail themselves of far better advice than that of

"Dear and reverend Sir, your sincere friend and affectionate brother in Christ,

"THOMAS JOHN CLAGGETT,
"Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Maryland.

"P. S.—If you can make it convenient to send me a dozen numbers of the "Churchman's Magazine," beginning with this month, I shall forward the money to any person you may appoint. Direct to me near Upper Marlborough, Prince George's County, Md."

APPENDIX B.

"THERE was presented to this House a letter signed William H. Winder, enclosing two documents, signed Ammi Rogers. Mr. Winder informs this House, that he is counsel for the said Ammi Rogers, who, in the documents referred to, appeals to the General Convention, from a sentence of degradation said to have been passed on him without trial or hearing, by the Right Rev. Bishop Jarvis, of Connecticut.

"This House having considered the contents of the aforesaid papers, are of opinion that, agreeably to the Constitution of this Church, they have no authority to act on an appeal in regard to the matter stated; and that there is no existing mode by which any bishop or bishops of this Church can take cognizance of the

conduct of any other bishop, unless at the desire of the Convention of the Diocese to which such a bishop should belong, and conformably to rules of process by them established.

"And whereas this House acted on the concerns of the said Ammi Rogers, in the session of 1804, as appears by the minutes; they now wish it to be known that their proceedings at that time originated in his own petition, relative to the following points:—

"1. Whether he belonged to the Diocese of Connecticut, or to that of New York.

"2. The recalling which he proposed, of a circular letter written by Bishop Jarvis, forbidding the petitioner to perform divine service in the Diocese, and the clergy and laity of the same to countenance him as a minister.

"3. A candid and impartial inquiry into his conduct and character.

"On the first of the said points, the House then assembled, being assured that both the parties were disposed to submit to their determination, declared it to be, that Ammi Rogers was a clergyman not of New York, but of Connecticut.

"The second point being a matter of internal concern of the Church in Connecticut, was not acted on judicially by this House; although as their opinion was expected on both sides, they expressed it as it was, approbatory of the measure.

"On the third point, they were of opinion that Ammi Rogers, far from having been treated with injustice, had not received a sentence sufficiently severe.

"To the opinions thus given, no addition or alteration is intended by this House; and they finally dismiss the subject from their consideration.

"This House, wishing the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies to be informed of their proceedings on the application now before them, direct, that the Secretary deliver to them a copy of the minute now made, with the papers on which it is grounded. They also direct the Secretary to deliver a copy of the minute to William H. Winder, esquire, and for the further information of that gentleman, to deliver with it a copy of the Constitution of this Church.

"The above was accordingly communicated to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, and a message was received from them containing the following unanimous resolution: 'That it is the opinion of this House, that, agreeably to the sixth article of the Constitution, the General Convention have no cognizance of the case of Ammi Rogers, and that he therefore have leave to withdraw his petition.'—*Journal of House of Bishops*, 1808.

"There was no doubt on the minds of the two bishops present, that there had been an oversight in not granting to this man a trial in the Church in that State. But the oversight, if they were correct in supposing one, was not theirs, nor was it in their power to correct it. Nothing could have been easier than the convicting of him of faults which deserve degradation. But it did not become the Bishops to advise the recalling of the act, and the giving of him a trial."—*Bishop White's Memoirs*, etc., p. 199.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. AMMI ROGERS, A. M.

CLERGYMAN OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, EDUCATED AT YALE COLLEGE IN CONNECTICUT, ORDAINED IN TRINITY CHURCH IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,—

PERSECUTED IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, ON ACCOUNT OF RELIGION AND POLITICS, FOR ALMOST TWENTY YEARS:

And finally,

FALSELY ACCUSED AND IMPRISONED

In Norwich Jail, for two years, on the charge of Crimes said to have been committed in the town of Griswold, in the county of New London, when he was not within about

ONE HUNDRED MILES OF THE PLACE,

And of which he was absolutely as innocent as the Judge who pronounced the sentence, or as any other person in the world.

COMPOSED, COMPILED, AND WRITTEN BY THE SAID

AMMI ROGERS,

Late Rector of St. Peter's Church in Hebron, Tolland Co. Conn. &c.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me."—*Jerem.*

"*Quis tanta fando temperet a lacrymis?*"—*Virgil*.—i. e.

Who can refrain from tears at the relation of such things.

SECOND EDITION.

SCHENECTADY: PRINTED BY G. RITCHIE, JUN.

1826.

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DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT, ss.

 **BE IT REMEMBERED**, That on the tenth day of January, in the forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America, AMMI ROGERS, of the said District, hath deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Author in the words following, to wit:

"Memoirs of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, A. M. a clergyman of the Episcopal Church, educated at Yale College, in Connecticut, ordained in Trinity Church, in the City of New-York, &c."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times there in mentioned."

CHAS. A. INGERSOLL, Clerk of the District of Connecticut.

A true copy of Record, examined and sealed by me,

CHAS. A. INGERSOLL, Clerk of the District of Connecticut.

From a paper printed in the city of Hartford in Connecticut, January 31st, 1824, entitled *THE FREE PRESS AND INDEPENDENT REPORTER*, intended to review and give an opinion of every new publication in that State.

"We have just finished reading the Memoirs of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, late an Episcopal Clergyman of this state. If we have entertained unfavourable impressions in regard to his innocence, they are now entirely obliterated. We sincerely believe him to be an unfortunate, persecuted man, and hope every one who has spoken and thought ill of his character, will do their consciences the justice to read his feeling appeal to the public. If, as he says, he had been a federal presbyterian minister, [that is a federal congregational presbyterian minister in Connecticut, who was in favor of an established sect, in favor of a union of church and state, in favor of compelling people by force of law to support that which they did not believe to be true,] "his character would have been shielded, and his person defended from all prosecutions, yea the plotters and abettors of this unparalleled persecution held up to everlasting contempt. How far this remark is true, let the circumstances be given in evidence."

TO THE READER.

WHEN a citizen, by groundless prejudice, by false representations and by palpable perjuries, has been made a victim to ecclesiastical denunciations and civil prosecutions when the privileges arising from civil liberty and religious freedom have been wrested from him, he still has one privilege left, the privilege of complaining. A statement of his case, and an appeal to the public, is the dernier resort of an injured man; such an appeal, supported by satisfactory evidence, secures a sentence in favour of the oppressed. To disregard such a sentence would not be just, and even if it were just, it would not be possible. There has been, for years past, much animadversion on the union of Church and State. I have practically felt the operation of this two fold cord which is now happily broken in Connecticut, and which has almost prostrated me in the destruction of it. But I still survive, and amidst the heavy artillery of a departed Bishop, and the artful machinations and cruel batteries of a Connecticut State's Attorney, I have been sustained by a consciousness of my innocence, and by the blessing of that merciful Being "who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." I live to make this my last effort through the press, which, Heaven be praised, is still untrammelled, to evince my innocence and my integrity.—Equal justice is due to all men, and the lovers of truth are so far the lovers of God. I cannot therefore but indulge the hope, that an enlightened and compassionate public will give the following pages an attentive reading, and an impartial consideration. To render railing for railing is no part of my profession, and to expose the real faults of my fellow citizens is no pleasure to me, and I intend not to do it, any further forth, than a religious regard to duty shall compel me. All human tribunals, whether civil or ecclesiastical, may and do err, and that which has been solemnly approved and sanctioned at one time, has been no less solemnly disproved and discarded at another. But without referring to former examples, those of a recent date will serve my purpose.

In the year 1819, Stephen and Jesse Bourn were arrested,

tried and condemned, in the state of Vermont, for the murder of one Colvin, the time and place of their execution were appointed, and no doubt of their guilt was indulged; but behold, just before the hour of their execution arrived, the said Colvin returned home hearty and well, and had not been injured! Here was much smoke, but no fire—no murder, no crime had been committed on the said Colvin, or on any other person by any one. In the year 1820, John C. Decker and Gideon Braman were arrested, tried and condemned to hard labour in the State Prison of New-York during their natural lives, for a burglary committed in Kinderhook; and after having been confined and laboured there about four months, it was undeniably proved that the said burglary was committed by George Lanman, and that they were entirely ignorant and innocent of the whole transaction. They were released, and Lanman is now in their place. Here again was smoke but no fire, as it respected them. It is not long since Joseph Inman was arrested, tried and condemned to be hung, within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, for the murder of Oliver Holmes; but before the time of execution arrived, Judge Arnold, in passing through the town of Dedham, or its vicinity, met the said Holmes on the road, hearty and well, and had not been injured. The Judge knew him, took him into his carriage, conveyed him to the proper authority, and saved the life of the said Inman. It is not long since a man of East Hartford was arrested, tried before the Superior Court of Connecticut, for forging a note; he was declared guilty, condemned and imprisoned in Newgate. But it was afterwards proved that the said note was forged by one Peck, and that he was innocent of the crime; he was released and Peck run away. It is not long since two men by the name of Snow were arrested, in the county of Windham and state of Connecticut, for burning a paper mill in that place. They were tried before the Superior Court, declared guilty, and sentenced to imprisonment in Newgate, in Simsbury mines, for life, and there they both died, constantly protesting their innocence to their last breath; and it is now beyond a doubt that they were falsely accused and unjustly condemned, and that the building was burnt by one Salter, who, it is said, has since

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confessed it. It is not long since a Mr. Berger was arrested, tried, condemned, and underwent the most exemplary and severe punishment in Baltimore, in the state of Maryland, for stealing \$1,000 from a widow woman; he was whipped, cropped and branded; but within a few weeks the money was found and recovered from a man in Virginia; and undeniably proved that Berger was entirely innocent of the crime.—In the year 1819, James Lanman, Esq. brought an information against me for committing crimes with Aseneth Caroline Smith, a single woman, in Griswold in the county of New-London, and state of Connecticut. In October, 1820, I had my trial, (if it can be called a trial,) the particulars of which will be stated hereafter. I was declared guilty, suffered two years imprisonment in the common jail in Norwich in said county; and within a few months after I was released, I proved beyond all contradiction, before a joint committee of both of the honourable General Assembly of Connecticut, in the Senate chamber, in the city of Hartford, that I was not, and for a long time had not been within about one hundred miles of Griswold, or of the said Aseneth, where, and when the crimes were committed, if they ever were committed by any one; nay, she herself appeared in person before the said committee in the said Senate chamber, and made solemn oath, which certainly was true, that I was absolutely innocent of the whole transaction, for which, on her account, I had unjustly suffered two years imprisonment; that she had been overpersuaded, and hired by the said Lanman and others, to accuse me falsely, and to commit perjury, which had broken her peace of mind, and caused her more sorrow, trouble, and tears, than all the transactions of her life beside.

This her confession and testimony were supported by the testimony of others, and my innocence could not but be apparent to every unprejudiced mind. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble! how I feel for those poor, unfortunate, miserable creatures who have committed, and been accessory to the dreadful sin of perjury! have they indeed formed a plan! have they devised means! have they effected their dreadful purpose of the disgrace, imprisonment, and utter ruin, in this world, of an innocent man, of a minister of the Gospel, of one

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who had always been their friend! Oh, how I lament, how I deplore and bemoan their sin, their ingratitude, their baseness!—"Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

For courts of law to err, is not uncommon; but the injustice of which, I here complain, is neither common nor small; I feel to forgive my enemies, persecutors and slanderers, but I desire that truth and justice may come to light; that perjury, wickedness, and vice may be suppressed. "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear." In this world the justice and goodness of the divine government will often escape the satisfaction of the most pious and diligent inquirer; the innocent are often condemned, while the guilty go clear, and with a fair character. Virtue is condemned to the punishment of vice, and vice receives the reward of virtue. Jesus Christ, himself, is born in a manger, while the murderous Herod, who had put 14,000 children to death, who were two years old and under, ascends the throne of Israel. The good St. Paul is a prisoner in chains while the bloody Nero wags the sceptre of the whole Roman Empire. The good John Rogers is burnt at the stake in Smithfield, by the Roman Catholics, while the infamous Bonner is the first bishop in England.—The good Lewis the sixteenth is beheaded, while the ambitious and hypocritical Bonaparte, who had drenched Europe with blood, murdered 6000 men between Java and Gaza in Asia, and changed God's holy Sabbaths to the tenth day, ascends the throne of France. The amiable Major Andre is hung at West Point, like a thief, and a murderer, while the traitorous and detestable Arnold is a Major General. The Rev. Ammi Rogers is a prisoner in Norwich, in Connecticut, while the hypocritical, coxcomical and detestable James Lanman is a Senator of the United States, while the suborners of perjury in the case of Mr. Rogers are at the bar, or in the faculty; but now by the just judgment of God, are stripped of the small portion of respect which they once received.

That equal justice is always done to all men in this world, is not true; and on this ground, even the heathen philosophers very justly argued the existence of a God, and the immortality of the soul; for say they, if there be a God, he must be

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a God of justice; and since all men do not receive equal justice in this world, there must be a future state of existence, in which the righteous Governor of the Universe will evidently distinguish between those who love and practice that which is just and good, and those who do not. In this world, the best and most moral men, the very salt of the earth, are often despised and neglected; nay, they are insulted, scandalized, persecuted, imprisoned, and even put to death as the worst of human beings; while cheats, thieves, liars, adulterers, and duellists, who are murderers; nay, the very vilest and most profane and immoral men, the very offscouring of all human society, are caressed and admired, are voted for and promoted: they ride upon the high places of the earth, they walk in robes or lawn, they are adorned with a crown, or a mitre, and are unmindful of their mortality or accountability. But the venerable Dr. Watts very excellently describes their situation in his paraphrase of the 73d Psalm, when he says,

"Lord, what a thoughtless wretch was I
To mourn and murmur and repine,
To see the wicked placed on high,
In pride and robes of honour shine,
But Oh, their end, their dreadful end!" &c.

In the final judgment of the world, the justice and goodness of the divine government, will be made manifest to every understanding. Then shall the innocent be protected, while the guilty are confounded. Then shall the meek, the humble, and the persecuted be exalted and rewarded, while the proud, the unjust, the malicious, and oppressive shall be brought low and punished. In that day, there will be nothing hid which shall not be made manifest, there will be no deception which shall not be detected, no injustice which shall not be rectified; and unless by faith and repentance we come to God, in the appointed means of divine grace, we shall all likewise perish. The justice of God must be vindicated, the guilty must be punished, the innocent must be protected and rewarded, or the throne of Heaven must fall. By the deeds of the law no flesh can live. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God: but in, and through him "*who died for our offences and rose again for our justification,*"

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every son and daughter of the human race may obtain forgiveness and be for ever happy with the Lord, and with each other.

Though from my fellow men I have not deserved the disgrace, the imprisonment, and the affliction loaded upon me, and upon my friends; yet before that God unto whom "all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid," in other respects, I have often offended in thought, word, and deed, and as I hope and expect God, for Christ's sake to forgive me; so I feel in my heart to forgive my enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and pray God to turn their hearts. Still I feel it my duty, in the promotion of truth and justice, in the suppression of perjury, wickedness and vice, and in the conveyance of that knowledge which may be honorable to God and useful to mankind, to lay before the public the following Memoirs, which I entreat the reader to peruse with attention, and consider with candour; and to believe me his persecuted friend and humble servant in the ministry of the Gospel of peace and reconciliation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

AMMI ROGERS.

HEBRON, OCTOBER 7th, 1823.

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CHAPTER I.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY.

I, AMMI ROGERS, was born in the town of Branford, in the county of New-Haven, in the state of Connecticut, on the 26th of May, in or about the year of our Lord, 1770. My father was Thomas Rogers, who departed this life in Branford, on the 23d of June, 1804, aged 79. He was the son of Josiah Rogers, who departed this life in Branford, about the year 1750, aged 86. He came from Long Island, was a son of one of three brothers who came from England and were grandsons of the celebrated John Rogers, a clergyman of the Church of England, burnt by the Roman Catholics in Smithfield, in the first year of the reign of queen Mary, 1554. My grandfather was one of the proprietors of the town of Branford; he owned and occupied the extensive farm and mills which are now owned and occupied by my brother Josiah Rogers and which have been in possession of the family from about the earliest settlement of the town. My mother, before she was married was Rebecca Hobart, daughter of Abijah Hobart, of Stonington, in New-London county. By him, a relation with the family of Masons is claimed; also, with the Rev. Mr. Hobart, the former minister of Fairfield, and his descendants. My grandmother Rogers was a Goodsell—my grandmother Hobart was a Birtholomew. My brothers were, Abijah, Rufus, Thomas, Josiah, Eliphalet and Hobart—my sister was Irepe, who is married to Thelus Todd—and, except the false and scandalous accu-

sations charged upon me, there never was, so far as I know or believe, a stain or even suspicion of immorality fixed upon my father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, brother or sister. Perhaps there is not in Connecticut, a family which

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is and always has been more exempt from the practice of every vice, than that to which I have the honor to belong. In the year 1783, I entered the academy in Litchfield, under the tuition of Mr. Osborn, and boarded in the family of the Hon. Andrew Adams, who was related to my father's family. In the year 1786, I entered Yale College in New-Haven, under the direction of the Rev. President Stiles. Here I became more seriously impressed with the importance of religion, and the awful concerns of eternity. My parents were pious, and strict in the Congregational Presbyterian religion, and I had been brought up in that way. From my earliest childhood, I had been impressed with a sense of God, of his omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, and of my own accountability. But human inability and human accountability were so contrary to the justice and goodness of God, that I sheltered myself under the doctrine of unconditional election and foreordination. This was taught in my catechism, and if that were true, I was safe; but when I became convicted of my lost and undone condition by nature, and by practice, I perceived that if God should enter into judgment with his creatures, by the deeds of the law, no man living could be justified; for cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, and the law extends to the very thoughts of the heart, as well as to the outward actions of the body; that we were called upon to rend our hearts and not our garments, to be up and doing while the day lasts; that we were admonished, that now was the accepted time, that now was the day of salvation. I perceived that I had no power of myself, to help myself: that my sufficiency for any thing which was good and acceptable to God, must come from God, that his grace was sufficient for me and for all men; therefore did he invite all the ends of the earth to look to him and be saved; therefore did he expostulate with his people, why will ye die, O house of Israel! The sacrifices under the law, and the atonement made by Jesus Christ under the Gospel, were sufficient for all men, even the greatest of sinners. I found my disposition changed; I found myself enlightened as to divine and spiritual things; I found my affections, my prospects, my anticipations

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and expectations were not on predestination and foreordination, but on the mercy of God, through the merits and atonement of Christ. In this way I became converted, and as a grateful return to the great Father of all mercies, I determined, and I thought it my duty to preach the gospel, the good news to all men—free salvation to every son and daughter of the human race; and the unspeakable danger to which they expose themselves, if they neglect so great salvation. I could not perceive the propriety of preaching free salvation to all men, if it were not possible for all men to be saved; and if it were possible for all men to be saved, then the doctrine which I had been taught must be false. That God had, from all eternity, foreordained who should be saved and who should be damned, I could not reconcile with the truth of his word, in swearing by himself that he desired not the death of a sinner; in inviting all the ends of the earth to look to him and be saved; in saying that his mercy was over all his works; in being the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; in saying that this will be the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light; in saying that the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Now to say, that God never designed, nor intended,

nor wished, nor put it in the power of all mankind to be saved, was, in my opinion, neither honorable to God, nor useful to mankind, nor did I believe it to be true. But if people will do despite the spirit of grace, if they will resist the Holy Ghost, if they will perjure themselves and pervert the cause of justice, mercy and goodness, if they do not use the means of grace, but live and die in the disposition and practice of what they know to be wrong, they will be damned, they must be miserable and wretched. Wherefore, saith the prophet, "let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The great design of all true religion, and of all good preaching, is to change the natural

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disposition of the human heart, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and to induce all mankind to live that sober, righteous, and godly life while in this world, which will terminate in everlasting happiness in the world to come.

While I was a member of College, my religious convictions were strong, my impressions were deep, my conversion was hopeful and joyous, but my views of the doctrines of religion were variant from the Saybrook confession of faith, and the Assembly's Catechism, though at that time an opportunity had not occurred for me to examine any other system. At length I obtained permission to attend, for half a day, divine worship in the Episcopal Church; and although I was a stranger to their church government and worship, yet their doctrine was liberal, and conformable to what I had previously thought. This induced an inquiry into the origin of the religion in which I had been educated, and I found that when our forefathers first came to this country, they came from England; that when they came from England they came from the Church of England, and were Dissenters from that Church. This induced an enquiry into the cause and ground of their separation—into what they gained, and into what they lost. This brought to view a subject with which I was wholly unacquainted, viz. the government of the christian church, the authority necessary in the regular and due administration of the sacraments, the articles of the christian faith, and the worship of God as practised by churchmen and dissenters. About this time appeared the letters of the Rev. Dr. Bowden to president Stiles, on the subject of a lenial succession of Bishops, by a valid ordination, which were not answered. I also read Potter on Church Government, Cave's Lives of the Fathers, Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, and many other excellent writers on the part of the church. I also read a history of the Puritans in England, the New England Memorial, Mather's Magnalia, and the Cambridge and Saybrook Platforms, with such other books as I could find on the part of the dissenters. My earnest endeavor was to learn and know the truth, and that I might have a disposition to act accordingly. At this time, I never had within my knowledge, seen a Bap-

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tist, Methodist, or a Quaker, but was fully satisfied that whoever departed from the government of any society, departed from that society; that whoever departed from the government of the christian church, did, by that very act, depart from the church, and was in danger of losing the benefit of all that Christ had done, and suffered for him; that as no one could lawfully act in the name of another without his authority, so no one could lawfully baptize or administer the sacrament or hold forth the terms of life and salvation to a guilty world, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without authority from God; that this authority could only be obtained in an immediate and extraordinary commission from Heaven, and then immediate and extraordinary works must be produced to prove it, for God never requires his creatures to believe that which he has not given

them evidence to believe; or it must be obtained by a succession. To pretend to work miracles, or to produce extraordinary works, was ridiculous and vain; to claim a succession, authentic documents must be produced to prove it; and this could only be done in the Episcopal church, which included the Greek, Latin, English, and other churches, but not the dissenters from the church of England. Many very able, and pious men and women were among them, but I could not be satisfied, that by their separation from the government, doctrine, and worship of the universal church, they had gained any thing which was honorable to God, or useful to mankind; for in the Episcopal church they might be as able, as amiable, and as pious as they could be in their own way. But they had lost much.

I could not but think they were mistaken in separating from the church of England, but at the same time adopted this mode of reasoning, viz. after diligent inquiry and fair examination, I sincerely think that I am right in my religion, but I claim not infallibility—I may be mistaken; if I am, I hope God will forgive me; others may be as sincere in their religion, as I am in mine. If I say that God will not forgive them, how can I expect him to forgive me, if I should happen to be wrong. So that whoever shall pass sentence of condemnation upon his fellow christian, it is a sentence of

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condemnation passed by himself, upon himself, if he happens to be wrong. True it is, that two things, which are opposite in themselves, cannot both be right at the same time, and every person who differs from me, must think that I am wrong, or that he himself is wrong; and woe unto them who shall make no difference between right and wrong! But let each one say for himself in the language of the Poet,

“ Let not this weak, unknowing hand,
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I deem thy foe.

If I am right, oh! teach my heart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, thy grace impart
To find the better way.”

While a member of College, I left the congregational Presbyterian religion, in which my parents and I had been brought up, and joined the Episcopal church; and I did it because I then thought, and now think it was my duty. I thought that the Episcopal church was of divine appointment; that in it the sacraments were administered by divine and undoubted authority; that the doctrines taught in that church were in every point of view honorable to God, and useful to man, and supported by the authority of God's word; that the worship of God in that church did not depend upon the discretion or indiscretion of any one man, and was not as various and as discordant as the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of all those who should lead in their devotions; but was founded upon the temper and disposition of the gospel and supported by the authority of the holy scriptures. In this church, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all, working in due season, that we should bring forth the fruits of a virtuous and good life. Constantly to unite in the same forms of worship has a tendency to bring us all to the same disposition, and a sameness of disposition creates friendship in all beings and in all worlds, (so far as my knowledge extends) and by this, says our blessed Saviour, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.

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A PRAYER.

“ O, Almighty and Everlasting God, who alone can govern the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, make me, beseech thee, at all times to love those things which thou dost command, and to desire those things which thou dost promise, that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world,

my heart may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ my Lord.”

Our Father who art in heaven, &c.

CHAPTER II.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

I was graduated at Yale College, in New-Haven, Connecticut, in the year 1790; and soon after, was placed under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Jarvis in Middletown, (afterwards bishop Jarvis,) in the study of divinity and ecclesiastical history, and boarded in his family. My situation soon became unpleasant in consequence of his churlish behaviour in his family and neglect to give me suitable instruction. I left his house and was placed under the direction, in my studies, of the Rev. Edward Blakeslee, of North Haven, and the Rev. Doctor Mansfield, of Derby. At this, Mr. Jarvis appeared to be mortified and displeased; his endeavors to excite a disgust against me, in the minds of some of the clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church, were soon communicated to me, and I soon became sensible of the effects of them. Application was made to me, to perform divine service, and to preach, under the direction of the Rev. Doct. Mansfield, in the churches in Waterbury, in Woodbury, and in Salem, which I did to the unanimous approbation of the parishes. But Mr. Jarvis, by the consent of bishop Seabury, soon sent Mr. Hart, then a candidate for the ministry, to take charge of these parishes. This excited uneasiness, and a division among them. I declined performing service there, the church in Salem refused to employ Mr. Hart, and unfeignedly

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feelings were excited. In the year 1791, I attended the Convention or Convocation of the church, in Watertown with a view of being examined and admitted as a candidate, but perceiving the hostile disposition of Mr. Jarvis, and the influence he had gained with some of the clergy, I withdrew without offering myself, or making my intentions known. And wishing to avoid any thing unpleasant, I received letters of recommendation from the Rev. Dr. Mansfield, the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, and others; also from the church in Branford, Northford, and others, and went into the state of New-York, and commenced a Reader in the churches in Schenectady and Ballston, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Ellison, of Albany. In this situation, having given notice to the bishop of New York, I remained until the next year, when I was recommended to the said bishop of New York, and standing committee of the church in that state, for deacon's orders, by the Rev. Dr. Mansfield, and the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, in whose families I had resided, and studied divinity and ecclesiastical history; by the church in Branford, where I had been born and brought up, and where I had been known from my infancy, and where public notice had been given to the congregation, assembled in the church, for public worship on Sunday, the 15th day of April, 1792, that in the month of June, in that year, I should apply to the bishop and standing committee of the church, in the state of New York, to be ordained a deacon, and they were then solemnly called upon in the name of God, if they knew any thing scandalous in my conduct or character, or any just cause or reason why I should not be ordained, to let it be known within one month, that it might be communicated to the proper authority. I was also recommended as aforesaid, by the church in Northford, by the church in Guilford, by the church in Ballston, and by the church in the city of Schenectady, where I then resided, and by the Rev. Mr. Ellison of Albany, under whose care and direction I had been employed as a reader for about one year; with these recommendations, and my diploma from college, I offered myself to the aforesaid bishop and standing committee,

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to be examined and ordained a deacon; and on the 18th and 19th days of June, 1792, I was examined by the Right Rev.

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Bishop Provoost, and the said standing committee, at the house of the Rev. Dr. (afterwards bishop,) Moore, in the city of New York. First, on my internal call, and views in regard to the ministry; on that change of the natural disposition, which is necessary to fit us for God's heavenly kingdom; in my knowledge and belief in the holy scriptures, and my earnest intention by God's grace to conform my heart and practice to them; in my knowledge of the English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages; in my knowledge of a general system and body of divinity, and ecclesiastical history; in my knowledge of the lives and travels of the apostles and primitive fathers of the church; in my knowledge of the general and liberal arts and sciences, &c.; and after two days strict trial and full examination, and with the aforesaid recommendations, I was honorably approved, accepted, and recommended to the said bishop, as the canons directed, to be ordained. The day after this recommendation, the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, of Middletown, in Connecticut, came to New York and informed the Rev. Dr. Beach, one of the said standing committee, that I was a very unworthy young man, and had actually been refused holy orders in Connecticut. I assured Dr. Beach, that Mr. Jarvis was my enemy, because I had left his house, and refused to live and study with him, and that what he had said was not true. I requested him to suspend his judgment, and not to mention what Mr. Jarvis had said, until I could go to Connecticut and obtain further recommendations, and a certificate from the secretary, that I had not been refused orders in that state. This he consented to do, and I accordingly went to the Rev. Dr. Dibble, of Stamford, stated my case to him; requested him to examine me and my documents, and if he should find me worthy and well qualified, to recommend me to the bishop and standing committee of New-York, to be ordained. This he very freely did, and at the same time expressed his astonishment at the conduct of Mr. Jarvis. I then went to the Rev. Mr. Oglesvie, of Norwalk, made the same statement and request, and obtained the same recommendation. I then went to the Rev. Mr. Shelton, of Newfield, to the Rev. Mr. Clark, of Huntington, and to the Rev. Mr. Marsh, of New-Milford, made to them in-

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dividually the same communication and request, and after due examination, received the same recommendation from them. I then went to the house of the Rev. Mr. Perry, of Newtown, who was secretary of the Convention of Connecticut, to obtain a certificate, that I had not been refused holy orders in that state, in order to contradict the falsehood of Mr. Jarvis. When I arrived there, Mr. Perry was from home on a journey; I stated my business to Mrs. Perry, and wished to examine the records, which I did in her presence, and in the presence of a Mr. Isaac Davis who was there, a young gentleman with whom I was acquainted, when I was a member of college: not finding my name on the record, as I was sure it was not, Mr. Perry being from home, the day of my ordination having been appointed, and nothing but the evidence of a plain matter of fact wanted; Mr. Davis consented to give a certificate in the name of Mr. Perry, that no act of the bishop and clergy of Connecticut, had been passed, refusing me orders in that state; this he did—and with this certificate, and with these recommendations, I returned to New York, satisfied Dr. Beach, (who was only one of a committee of eight, and only a majority was necessary,) and I was ordained a deacon, in Trinity church, in the city of New-York, by the Right Rev. Samuel Provoost, D. D. bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in that state, on the twenty-fourth day of June, A. D. 1793.

On the day after my ordination, I called on the said Dr. Beach for my papers and documents, as they could be of no use to him. Those which were directed to the standing committee he claimed as vouchers for his conduct in recommend-

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ing me, and refused to return them; but the certificate written by Mr. Davis, was not directed to any body, and was returned to me. On my way home, which was in Schenectady, I went to the house of Mr. Perry, in Newtown, gave him the certificate which Mr. Davis had given me in his absence, told him how it came by it, and what it was given for. His reply was, "I am sorry that I was not at home when you was here before, for I should have been glad to have afforded you every assistance in my power, and am glad that Mr. Davis gave you this certificate." He then tore it in two, and gave

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me one half of it, as we were standing near each other. He then said, "to prevent any difficulty that may arise, I had better give you one myself, and then sat down and wrote the following, with his own hand, and which is now in my possession, viz.

"This may certify, that no act has ever been passed by the Convocation of the clergy of Connecticut, prohibiting the Rev. Mr. Ammi Rogers receiving holy orders in this church."

Certified by

PHILO PERRY, Secretary of Convocation.

July 5th, 1792."

Soon after my return to Schenectady, I received the following letter, addressed to

The Rev. Ammi Rogers, Schenectady.

New-York, August 7th, 1792.

REVEREND SIR,

Suffer me to congratulate you on your ordination, and to wish you all possible success and happiness. From my acquaintance with you, I feel strongly impressed with an idea of your eminence. I have seen the Rev. Mr. Perry, of Newtown, and informed him that I had given you a certificate, and put his name to it; he said I had done right, and that he had seen you since, and had given you one to the same purport in his own hand writing, and that the one which I wrote was destroyed. I have some expectation of being in your part of the country this fall; if such a thing should happen, I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you.

Your sincere friend and well wisher,

ISAAC DAVIS.

My ministry was blessed beyond what I had reason to expect, though not to exceed my endeavours; a sense of the divine Majesty, and all his adorable attributes, were deeply fixed in my mind, with an affecting impression of the awful responsibility of my office; my endeavours were to make my hearers sensible of their lost and undone situation, by the natural depravity of their minds, and the absolute necessity of the use of all the means of grace, that they might be converted and enjoy the comfortable and blessed hope of glory, which would be that peace of God, which passeth all understanding, that

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peace which this world could not give. My preaching and my endeavours were to represent the God of heaven, whom we adored, in the most amiable and pleasing point of view possible, and to persuade my people to love him, and to imitate him. As my preaching respected my fellow men, it was first to inform and enlighten their understanding in the most religious and moral doctrines and duties of Christianity; and then to move their affections, to believe and act accordingly.

From the 24th of June, 1792, to October, 1793, I administered 130 baptisms; I married 20 persons; and deposited five dead bodies of my fellow christians in the grave, "looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Within the time last mentioned, the building of St. George's church in Schenectady, which during, and since the revolutionary war, had lain most of the time destitute, neglected, and greatly injured, was repaired and made comfortable. It was an elegant stone building, with a handsome steeple and a good organ, and had been well finished. It would be ungrateful and unjust not to mention the name of Mr. William Cor-

left, a man from the Isle of Man, whose pious attentions and generous contributions to St. George's church, in the city of Schenectady, ought never to be forgotten; for to his example, and exertions that parish are much beholden. During this time also, the church in Ballston, from only about fourteen families, had become numerous and respectable, and their house of worship was raised and enclosed; the greatest friendship and harmony subsisted between me and all my people, and among themselves.

In October, 1793, I attended the convention of the Episcopal Church in the state of New-York, assembled in the city of New-York, of which I was a member, and then made the foregoing returns to the bishop, received his approbation and thanks, with an invitation to preach in Trinity church, and in St. Paul's church, in the city of New-York, which I did. I was now in love, friendship, and fellowship with the bishop and all the clergy, with my own parishes, and with the whole church, except Mr. Jarvis, and some of his particular friends. With us

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conduct I felt myself abused, though what he intended for my injury, had eventuated in my good and prosperity; for my situation in the state of New-York was much better than I could have expected in Connecticut. I was favoured with thousands of blessings, and my great and earnest care was to make a grateful and practical return, by a conscientious discharge of my ordination vows, and a holy, humble, and exemplary walk before God and his people, of every denomination. Oh, how often have I alone, with closed doors, on my knees, before God, read the ordination service of the Episcopal church, with prayers, and tears, and fasting, that God of his great mercy, would please to direct and assist me in all my doings, with his most gracious favour and further me with his continual help, that in all my works, begun, continued, and ended in him, I might glorify his holy name, and finally, that I, and all committed to my care, and the whole world of mankind, might obtain everlasting life and happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

The year 1794 was to me vastly important. In that year I was married to the very amiable Miss Margaret Bloore, about 13 years old, of an excellent disposition, and well educated. She was the only daughter of Mr. Joshua Bloore, a gentleman from Manchester, in England; who came into this country and settled as a merchant in Albany, and afterwards moved into the county of Saratoga, where I became acquainted with him and his family. His wife, before he married her, was a Margaret Brintnal, of Langly parish, in Derbyshire, in England. In that year, I was recommended to the bishop and standing committee of the Episcopal church, in the state of New-York; was again examined by them as before, was recommended by the said standing committee, to be ordain-

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ed by the said bishop. And in Trinity church, in the city of New-York, on the 19th day of October, A. D. 1794, I was ordained a PRIEST, by the Right Rev. Samuel Provoost, D. D. bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church in the state of New-York. Before this, it was known that Dr. Beach and Mr. Jarvis had become reconciled in regard to the falsehood communicated relative to me; and he was left out of the said standing committee, though he attended, and assisted at my ordination as a PRIEST, and received the sacrament of the Lord's supper with me at that time. But the same night, after the ordination, he complained to the bishop that I had brought to him a forged certificate, before I was ordained a

DEACON. The next day the bishop called us both before him, and caused an inquiry. I stated to him the case as it was, relative to the certificate which Mr. Davis had given to me, in the absence of Mr. Perry; that on my way home I called on Mr. Perry, informed him what was done, and gave him the certificate; that he approved of it, and gave another to the same purport, in his own hand writing, which I then laid before the bishop, with the letter of Mr. Davis, dated August 7th, 1792. Dr. Beach acknowledged, before the bishop, that the facts were true, as I stated them, but said he thought there ought to be an investigation. The bishop replied that he did not know how that could be brought against me as a PRIEST, which took place before I was a deacon; that Dr. Beach was present, and assisted at my ordination as a priest, and if he had any objection, then, or before, was the time to make it; that I had undergone a better examination, and was amply recommended, by more clergymen, and more churches than any one he had ever ordained, and the result of my ministry proved that he had not been imposed upon; that in all forgeries, there must be some falsehood, but in this case, there is no pretence of falsehood, and it would be very unlikely that so many respectable clergymen and parishes would recommend me to be ordained in New-York, if I had been refused orders in Connecticut or if I was unworthy of the ministry; that the certificate itself was a mere evidence of fact, such as any one might have given, who had examined the records; that it was obtained, and used,

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not to prevent truth and justice, but to suppress an acknowledged falsehood; and he therefore decided that Dr. Beach had no cause of complaint, and dismissed the inquiry, desiring us to be reconciled. Dr. Beach then, in the presence of the bishop, requested me to overlook all that had passed between us, offered me his hand in friendship, and asked me to preach for him the next Sunday, in St. George's church, in the city of New-York, the whole of which I complied with, and the matter was settled. Still there was not that cordiality between him and me, that there was between me and the other clergy.

From October, 1793, to October, 1794, I administered 184 baptisms: married 18 persons, and buried 11, and had preached 176 sermons; my ministerial labours had become very extensive, and I had reason to believe, very acceptable. When in the city of New-York, I preached in Trinity church, in St. Paul's church, and in St. George's chapel, in Beekman street. Reflecting on the occurrences of this year, I feel to express myself in the words of the 14th hymn, in the book of Common Prayer, viz.

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise," &c.

My general practice was to encourage family devotion every day, setting the example myself; to compose and write my own sermons, and the subject was taken from that part of the holy scriptures, which, by the established order of the Episcopal church, every minister was obliged to read to his people on that day.

From Oct. 1794 to Oct. 1795, I administered 123 baptisms; admitted, upon their credible profession of faith, repentance, and an earnest intention, by God's grace, to lead a new and better life, 90 persons to the holy communion; I joined 20 persons in marriage, deposited 8 dead bodies of my fellow christians in the grave, and I delivered about 160 sermons; was much given to reading, to study, to self examination and to prayer. I attended the convention, was in great love and friendship with the Bishop, with my brethren the clergy and

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with the laity. I preached in most of the Episcopal churches in the city of New-York, and returned to my parishes with a renewed determination that I would, by God's help, fulfil my

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ordination engagements.

At this time my ministerial labours extended to almost every part of the county of Saratoga, and to some of the neighboring counties.

From October 1795 to October 1796, I administered 246 baptisms. The number of communicants had increased to 120. I married 32 persons, and buried 8.

From Oct. 1796, to Oct. 1797 I administered 186 baptisms; my communicants had increased to 153. I married 14 persons and buried 4.

In the year 1797, there was a very unhappy occurrence. Delegates from the state of New-York to the general convention of the Episcopal church in the United States, to be holden in the city of Philadelphia, were to be appointed, for the purpose, among other things, of revising the 39 articles of religion of the church of England, and of adopting them in this country, or of rejecting them. It so happened that in this election the clergy were almost unanimous in my favor and the laity were about equally divided in their choice between the Rev. Dr. Beach, my former opposer, and me. In this way they balloted eleven times, each party adhering to his vote and no choice was made, when the said Dr. Beach arose and said, if my brethren the clergy suppose that that young man, meaning me, is better qualified to fill that most important station in the church—one of the most important stations in the church that ever was or perhaps ever will be, when the articles of religion in the whole church in the United States are to be arranged and settled, I now declare that I will not accept the appointment, nor will I ever set in this convention with him again. He then took his hat, went off, apparently in anger, and I was almost unanimously elected; went to Philadelphia on that business, and was a member of the said general convention in 1797, '98 and '99. I was at the same time a member of the convention of the Episcopal church in the state of New-York, as I had been for five years before: and it is believed that few clergymen of my age had

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received more honor, more approbation, and more preferences among his brethren, in the convention and in the church than I had; though with those who had, in my opinion, unreasonably dissented from the church of England and the established order of the christian church, there was continual warfare. Soon after my return from the convention in 1797 I received the following letter from the Rev. Dr. Moore afterwards Bishop Moore, viz.

To the Rev. Ammi Rogers, in Ballston.

DEAR SIR— *New York, Dec. 11th, 1797.*

I have been expecting for some days past a letter either from you or from Mr. Ellison, respecting the business of the Lutheran church, for the management of which, you know we are the committee appointed by the convention. I wish you would attend to it, and let me know the result of your deliberations.

Doctor Beech is very much displeased at your appointment as a delegate to the general convention. He conceives himself insulted by putting you in the place which he supposes ought to have been filled by himself, and seems to think it necessary to shew by depreciating your character, that the convention made an improper choice. I called on him the day before yesterday to converse with him on the subject; he charges you with having brought forged recommendations, when you applied for holy orders. I told him I should certainly state the matter to you; and I wish you would give me some explanation of this business, so that, if it be practicable, I may check the evil reports which some people are circulating among our brethren the clergy, and I have reason to think among the laity also. You know the high sense I entertain of your industry and utility in the church: and to rub off any stain which calumny may attempt to throw upon innocence, will be a great satisfaction to your friend and brother.

BENJAMIN MOORE.

To the foregoing letter, I sent the following answer:

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To the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Moore, New-York.

Ballston, December 20th, 1797.

REV. AND DEAR SIR—

I received your favor of the 11th inst. this morning, and

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now thank you for taking my part in my absence. When Dr. Beach says that I brought forged recommendations, when I applied for holy orders, it is a NOTORIOUS FALSEHOOD, and he knows it. The matter to which he alludes was fully inquired into by Bishop Provost, some years ago, viz. on the day after I was ordained a PRIEST; and was by him dismissed as unworthy of notice, and to him I refer you for information on the subject. [See pages 17, 18, 21.] I wish you and Mr. Bissitt would call on Bishop Provost on the subject, and then inform Dr. Beach and his friends what the Bishop says about it; this will make him look meaner than he now does, if possible.

As to the business of the Lutheran church, Mr. Ellison and I have had a consultation on the subject, and are calculating to see the Rev. Mr. Quitman, when we will let you know more about it; I think the prospect is favorable. I have a call to attend a funeral in Galway, and must bid you farewell, and I am, dear sir, with every sentiment of esteem and affection, your much obliged friend and brother.

AMMI ROGERS.

Bishop Provost entirely satisfied the Rev. Dr. Moore, and the Rev. Mr. Bissitt, on the subject of Mr. Perry's certificate, which Dr. Beach had most falsely and most unjustly called forged recommendations, when I applied for holy orders, and I heard no more of it until 1803.

From October 1797, to October 1798, I administered 254 baptisms; my communicants were 108; I joined 36 persons in marriage, and attended 19 funerals; and preached about 180 sermons. There was but one country clergyman in the state of New-York, at that time, whose returns to the bishop, or whose ministerial labors were as extensive as mine.

From October 1798, to October 1799, when as usual I attended the convention, I administered 168 baptisms; had 210 communicants, married 16 persons, attended 13 burials, preached about 170 sermons.

At this time, an anabaptist teacher had commenced an attack upon me, and upon the church, by publishing in the newspaper, printed in Ballston, an anonymous piece against the observance of Christmas, and the other festivals of the

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church. This piece was answered by me, and that again was answered by him, and thus the dispute was pursued for many months, with great warmth on both sides; until at length a public discussion was personally had in the Court-house in Ballston, in presence of many hundreds of people. The result was, as might have been expected, no conviction of error on either side; but, worsted in argument, my antagonist and his party had recourse to personal invective; this was replied to by the wardens and vestry of the church in Ballston and by more than forty of my nearest neighbors, of every denomination; in which my conduct and character, both as a minister and as a man, were fully vindicated.

From October 1799, to October 1800, I administered 137 baptisms; my communicants had increased to 228, I married 28 persons, and buried 3, and preached about 150 sermons, exclusive of many lectures and public exhortations.

This year was to me the beginning of sorrow. I had devoted myself entirely to the work of the ministry. In the county of Saratoga, my people had increased from about 14 families, to about 4000 souls; they had built a new church in Ballston, and finished it with an elegant steeple, bell and organ. They had become incorporate, and built a new church with a handsome steeple, in the town of Milton, and also in the town of Stillwater. In Waterford they had become a body corporate, and a large number had joined that society; a very respectable society was also collected in Charlton and

in Galway, and in other parts of that county. I had, some time before, resigned my parish in Schenectady to the Rev. Robert G. Wetmore, who was a very worthy man, and a most excellent clergyman, and my labors were extended to Fort Hunter and to Johnstown. I had visited and preached and administered sacraments in Boon's settlement, in Utica, in Paris, and in various parts of the county of Otsego; and in many other parts of the country, did I, as opportunity offered, extend the knowledge of what I conceived to be true religion; prosperity in the ministry, and a fair reputation, seemed to attend me wherever I went. It was customary for the wardens and vestrymen of the several parishes in my care, to meet at least once a year, to become acquainted with each

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other, and to consult means for their mutual good and prosperity.

"At a meeting of the wardens and vestrymen of the several Episcopal churches in the county of Saratoga, viz. in Ballston, Milton, Stillwater, Waterford, Charlton, Galway, Greenfield, and Providence, in the state of New-York, duly warned and convened in Ballston, February 1st, 1800,

"Voted unanimously, That the thanks of the several churches in the county of Saratoga, be presented to the Rev. Ammi Rogers, for his unwearied labors and faithful services, in the promotion of religion; that owing to his abilities and discretion, the Episcopal church has become prosperous and respectable; that his exemplary piety and spotless morals, uniformly demonstrated in his life and conversation, merit our warmest acknowledgements; and that no exertions on our part shall be wanting, to render his situation comfortable and easy, and his life happy.

"The Rev. Mr. Rogers then thanked them for their politeness and attention to him since his first acquaintance with them. He said, if there was any thing which could give him pleasure, it certainly would be the consciousness of having done his duty, and the love and approbation of his parishioners; that he then acknowledged with gratitude, that in his opinion, few clergymen could boast of more instances of attention and respect from his parishioners than he could; that he could not withhold his grateful acknowledgements to Almighty God for crowning his endeavors in the cause of religion, with a success far beyond his most sanguine expectations; that he felt himself happily situated, in regard to his parishioners, and if his past services and deportment had already met their approbation, and extracted from them a determination to afford him a support and to make his life easy and happy, he hoped that in future he should no less deserve it.

Attest. WARREN SMITH, Secretary."

In the summer and fall of 1800, a sickness prevailed in the county of Saratoga with which many died. My wife was taken with it, and on the eleventh day departed this life, in the 36th year of her age. When she was taken with the disease she was in full health and strength, with a child only a few months

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old; medical aid was soon called for, and the most skilful physicians attended; but alas! to no other purpose than a momentary relief. The day but one before she died, she wrote the following lines, in my absence, and they are the last words that she ever did write. Given over by the physicians, and knowing that she must soon die, she begins with these words,

"O thou, unknown, Almighty cause,
Of all my hope and fear,
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear.
If I have wander'd in those
Paths of life I ought to shun,
As something, loudly, in my breast
Demonstrates I have done,
Thou know'st that thou hast formed me
With passions wild and strong,
And hast'ning to their witching voice,
Has often led me wrong.
Where human weakness has come short,

Of frailty stepp'd aside;
Do thou, all good, for such thou art;
In shades of darkness hide,
Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But thou art good, and goodness still
Delighteth to forgive."

Not more than two hours before she departed this life, by her request, I administered to her, and to our neighbours who were present, the sacrament of the Lord's supper; the service she performed with astonishing strength of mind and clearness of voice, and particularly she repeated this part with uncommon interest and energy, viz.

"Therefore with angels, and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. Amen."

Only a few minutes before she expired, I asked her if she felt willing to die. Her reply was, "you and I have always lived happy together, and for your sake, and for the sake of my children, I wish to live; but for me, it is, without doubt, to take me from some great unforeseen evil, which would be to me worse than death, if I were to live; it seems to be the

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will of God that I should die, and I feel willing to obey it. The reader will excuse me in dwelling upon the last words and last moments of a much beloved and much respected wife; none can tell the anguish which I feel on this subject, except those who have experienced similar afflictions.

"To thee, my God and saviour, I
By day and night address my cry,
Vouchsafe my mournful voice to hear,
To my distress incline thine ear," &c.

88th Psalm, in the Prayer Book.

I was left with three small children, one an infant at the breast, and every thing appeared melancholy and gloomy even in my public and private devotions I was cast down; my studies were dull and lifeless, and it seemed as if the face of all goodness was hid from me. In the month of October, I went on a visit to my parents and friends, in Branford. I generally made it my business, after I had attended the Convention in the city of New-York every year to go to Branford and visit my friends, and to preach there one or two Sundays. A wish had often been expressed to me that I would return and settle there, but until now I never gave any encouragement. Overtures were soon made, and I delayed giving an answer until I had laid the case before the church in Ballston, and also before the bishop and clergy of New-York and of Connecticut. At this time I performed divine service, and preached for a few Sundays in the church in the city of Hartford; and was applied to for terms of settlement there, but refused to give any encouragement on account of the previous application made to me from Branford, and also because my people in the county of Saratoga were not informed of my inclination to leave them. I immediately wrote to Bishop Provost, to the Rev. Doct. Moore, who was soon after Bishop Moore, and to some of the other clergy, stating to them my intention to leave that state. From the said Rev. Doct. Moore, I received the following letter, viz.

To the Rev. Ammi Rogers, Ballston.

New-York, Oct 23d, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,
The day before yesterday, I received your letter by Mr.

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Morgan, and must confess, that I am not a little surprised to find, upon perusing the contents, that you are deliberating about leaving Ballston. I have hitherto been of opinion that your labours have been so eminently successful in that quarter of the country, your ministrations so acceptable to the people, and your situation becoming so easy and comfortable, with respect to temporal emoluments; from all these consider-

ations, I imagined that nothing could induce you to quit the county of Saratoga. You ask my advice on the occasion; it is impossible for me or any other brother clergyman, to give directions or to offer persuasions, on so delicate a subject. You will, no doubt, deem yourself obliged to exert all your abilities in advancing the kingdom of the Redeemer upon earth; you will earnestly seek the guidance of Him who is infinitely wise, and you will follow the dictates of conscience. Wherever you may think proper to fix yourself, be assured you have my sincere wishes and ardent prayers, for your temporal and eternal welfare.

Your affectionate brother,

BENJAMIN MOORE.

From the Rev. Doct. Moore, afterwards Bishop Moore, to the Rev. Ammi Rogers, Ballston.

New-York, Dec. 2d, 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote an answer to your letter from Hartford, but when I carried it to the house where Mr. Morgan lodged he was gone; a young gentleman, to whom I delivered it, promised to forward it by the first opportunity. I must confess, it is not without a little uneasiness and disappointment, I hear of your intention to leave this state and settle in Connecticut. I have always considered you as one of our most useful and active clergymen, and although I know you will be equally zealous and industrious, wherever you may fix yourself, still it would be a satisfaction to retain a more immediate connection with you, as members of the same convention.

The vestry of St. Mark's church are negotiating the business with Mr. Chase respecting a settlement in their church. Dr. Provoost has signified his intention to resign in the course of next spring, the Rectorship of Trinity church, and the

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Episcopate of the state. Thus great changes in our ecclesiastical affairs will ere long take place: whatever my situation may be, you will be remembered with sentiments of esteem and affection, by your friend.

BENJAMIN MOORE.

I had preached with approbation in all the Episcopal churches in the city of New York, occasionally, for ten years; had been constantly a member of the convention of the church; for three years was a member of the general convention of the Episcopal church in the United States; was frequently on some of the most important committees of the church. I had been duly appointed and constituted one of the first members of the corporation of Union College, in the city of Schenectady, constantly attended their meetings, and exerted myself for the prosperity of that institution. I had been initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry, in that state, and had passed through the several degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master, Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch. I obtained the Mediterranean Pass, was dubbed a Knight of the Red Cross, became a Knight of Malta, and was admitted into the Encampment of Sir Knight Templars. When the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons was first organized, I though at that time absent, was elected and appointed the first Grand Chaplain of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in the state of New-York. I had preached with approbation in all the principal cities and towns in the northern and eastern states, viz. Philadelphia, Newark, N. J. New York, Albany and Schenectady; in Hartford, Boston and Providence, and in many other towns and places; but the time was come when I was determined to leave the county of Saratoga. I went there in the year 1791, it was now 1801; my parishes had become very extensive, and my labours, arduous and fatiguing; and after the death of my wife, my house was lonesome, gloomy and desolate. My children were removed where they could be taken care of, and I was afflicted. The Episcopal church in Branford was vacant, the parish was perfectly unanimous and ardent in their wishes for me to return, and become their minister; my parents were then living there, my brothers and sister, and nu-

merous family connexions were residing in that town; and the Episcopal church was not so generally known and understood as I wished. At length I informed them that I was determined to leave the county of Saratoga. A meeting was called in Branford, East-Haven, and Northfield, and I was unanimously chosen Rector of their churches, which was communicated to the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, my former antagonist, who had now become Bishop of the Episcopal church in Connecticut. Their choice was approved of by him according to the canons, and sent to me in Ballston, which I laid before the church in that place, and requested a dismission from them. Silence, as if it had been the silence of death, prevailed, and not an eye which did not shed a tear. I was the first minister they ever had, most of the men and their children, had been baptized by me; they had been faithfully instructed in the faith and practice of the gospel, and in the concerns of their souls, and of eternity. They had by me been presented to the Bishop, and received the apostolic rite of confirmation. They had by me been admitted to the holy communion of the Lord's supper; I had visited them in sickness, instructed them when they were ignorant, comforted them in affliction, committed the dead bodies of their friends and relatives, their parents and children, their husbands or wives, their brothers or sisters, to the awful and silent grave, looking for the general resurrection and the life of the world to come through our Lord Jesus Christ. I had always been as ready to mourn with those who mourned as I was to rejoice with those who did rejoice; for ten years the sun had never risen upon a happier or more united minister and people; what I said was not only the voice of a minister, who had a tender regard for their souls, but of a friend, who loved them sincerely. My congregations were very large, and when I went into the pulpit, I had the satisfaction to think that there was not a person present, who would not willingly share their last loaf with me. After a long time of silence, old Mr. Betts, the senior warden, with a heart ready to break, his eyes gushing out with tears, and with a faltering voice, rose and said, Mr. Rogers, why do you wish to leave us? there is not a person in any of your parishes, who would no

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gladly carry you in his arms, if it were necessary; we all respect you, and have always been glad to do every thing in our power for your comfort. The death of your excellent wife, we all mourn, but it could not be prevented. Is it any thing which we have done, or which we have left undone, that induces you to wish to leave us? I replied, that it was not; but that I was in affliction, and wished to return to my parents and to the place of my nativity; that I thought the religious situation of Connecticut was such, as offered an opportunity of doing much good, and that I would endeavor not to leave them destitute of a minister, but would obtain some worthy person to take my place with them; that I had lived to see every Presbyterian minister dismissed from that county, while I had been there, viz. Mr. Skenk, from Ballston, Mr. Riply, from Ballston, eastline, Mr. Sill, from Milton, Mr. Sturges, from Charlton, Mr. Linsly, from Galway, Mr. Close, from Waterford, Mr. Campbell, from Stillwater, Mr. Condict, from Stillwater hill, Mr. Smith, from Saratoga, &c. That the Episcopal church in that county had increased far beyond any example in that state; that they had, within a few years, built four new and elegant houses for public worship; that in some places the meeting-houses were used as places of worship for Episcopalians; that from 14 families they had increased to about 4000 souls, and were now in a situation to settle ministers among them, and I thought I could do more good, and it would be more for my comfort to return to Connecticut, and now wished to be dismissed. Judge Walton, and others spoke against it, but in very affectionate terms, and the meeting was dismissed without so much as one voice or vote in favor of my request, and it was the only request which I had ever made of them which was not granted.

In the month of February, 1801, I called a meeting of all

the wardens and vestrymen, of all the Episcopal churches in the county of Saratoga, and in the northern part of the state of New-York, and invited the neighboring ministers to attend. At this meeting I laid before them an application made to the Episcopal churches in Ballston and Milton, for my dismission, that I might settle in Branford; also the vote for the settlement of me in that place, with the Bishop's consent; and stat-

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ed my request, that if I had been to them a faithful minister, and had deserved well from them, they would no longer object to my happiness, in not granting me a dismission. And I then engaged, that if they would grant my request, I would not leave them, until I had obtained some one to take my place; and that an answer was due from them to the church in Branford. Whereupon Judge Walton drew up the following resolution, which was passed, and given to me, and also a copy was sent by mail to the church in Branford, viz,

"At a meeting of the Rectors, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of the Episcopal Church in the Northern part of the State of New-York, by adjournment, held in the church in Ballston, February 3d, 1801.

"Whereas application has been made to the church wardens and vestrymen of the Episcopal churches of Ballston and Milton, from the Episcopal society of Branford, in Connecticut, requesting that they would permit the Rev. Mr. Rogers to leave the said churches, of which he is now Rector, that he might settle in Branford, the place of his nativity. And whereas, the said church wardens and vestrymen having taken the subject into serious consideration, think that the removal of Mr. Rogers from their churches, would be attended with very great inconveniences to the same, particularly as it is much to be feared that another clergyman cannot be obtained, who could unite the affections and the respect of the said congregations, in an equal degree with the Rev. Mr. Rogers. They cannot reflect on the departure of the Rev. Mr. Rogers from among them, without sincere sorrow, as they can scarcely hope to find a person endued with sufficient activity, to support the churches which have been established by the unremitting exertions of their present Rector, nor can they expect to meet with a man who can so well resist the constant opposition which is made to the blessed Episcopal church. But as the change of situation may be conducive to the happiness and welfare of Mr. Rogers, and as it would be improper and unbecoming, in the highest degree, to obstruct the interest and wishes of a rector, who has so well deserved from the said congregations—

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Therefore resolved, That in case the Rev. Ammi Rogers should deem it expedient to leave the said churches, he has (though reluctantly,) the approbation of the said church wardens and vestrymen; but in case he can remain with the said churches, without doing too great injury to his interest and happiness, they would gladly afford him every countenance and support, which they have hitherto given him.

HENRY WALTON, *Secretary.*

Resolved, That Henry Walton be a committee to transmit a copy of the foregoing resolution, to the Episcopal society in Branford, in answer to their application referred to in said resolution.

HENRY WALTON, *Secretary.*

CHAPTER IV.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

I remained in Ballston, and preached in my parishes as usual, until Whit-Sunday, June 24th, 1801; when I administered the sacrament, preached a farewell sermon, and as their minister, bid them an affectionate adieu. I had then during the time of my ministry, administered 1542 baptisms; the

name and age of each had been returned to the bishop of New York, at the annual convention; and are on the records of the church in Ballston. I had admitted more than 400 persons, in the county of Saratoga, to the holy communion, besides those in other places. I had joined more than 200 persons in marriage, and had in the whole, attended more than 100 funerals. I had been to Bishop Jarvis in person, and stated my intention of coming in that state, and settling there. I had been to bishop Provost, and obtained letters permissory for Bishop Jarvis to ordain the Rev. Mr. Thatcher, for the purpose of coming to Ballston, that I might settle in Branford. This was known and understood to be the agreement, and for this purpose Mr. Thatcher was ordained a priest by

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Bishop Jarvis, moved into my house, and on my farm, and took possession of my parishes, and then, and not till then I set off for Branford. On my way to New-York I was obstructed by contrary winds, and went on shore at Catskill, where I staid ten days, performed divine service and preached there almost every day, sometimes twice and three times in a day, and gathered a large congregation. I afterwards returned and assisted them in becoming a body corporate, which has remained and prospered there to this day. A very handsome salary was offered me to stay and settle there; and application was made by them to the church in Branford, for that purpose, but was rejected.

In the month of August, 1801, I arrived in Branford, and took charge of the church in that place, in East Haven, in Northford, and in Wallingford, without a dissenting voice or vote—all were pleased, all were happy. The congregations immediately arose into life and were greatly increased; many within a short time, in each parish, became impressed with a deep sense of the importance of religion and joined the communion. Many, who had hitherto neglected it, furnished themselves and their families with books of Common Prayer, and joined heartily and aloud in the worship of God, as performed in the Episcopal church: many, who had never done it before, now signed off from the Presbyterians, so called, and paid their taxes to the Episcopal church; and the prospect of piety, of increase, and of prosperity, was never fairer. I appeal to every person, who then belonged to these parishes, for the truth of what I say: but at this time party politics and party religion ran very high in Connecticut.

At a convention of the bishop and clergy of that state, in the city of Hartford, I arose and said:

MR. PRESIDENT—For many years I have thought, that to establish religion by force of civil law, was not conducive to genuine piety and to the real prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom here on earth. It is, in my opinion, wrong, essentially wrong, to compel people by force of law, to support that which they do not believe to be true; and civil or military force exercised in matters of religion has always eventuated in the oppression, in the distress, and in the destruction of mankind. In proof, shall I call to your view the first crusade under Peter the hermit. Do I see one million one hundred thousand of the human race cruelly murdered and slain. The history of the whole church evinces the truth

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of what I say. What was it but a union of church and state, that is, investing the church with civil power, supported by military force, that introduced and established Popery in Europe, Mahometanism in Asia, and something almost as bad in New-England. A union of church and state is like uniting fire and water, Heaven and earth, God and mammon. It is this which has established the Inquisition of Spain, and elsewhere. It is this which has caused so much oppression and distress in England, Ireland, and Scotland. It was this which murdered the Quakers in Salem, in Massachusetts; tied Roger Williams, and his friends, to the tail ends of ox carts, and whipped them and the Baptists, out of Boston. It was this which has fined and imprisoned hundreds of our fellow citizens in Connecticut, because they would not, or could not, pay money to support that which they did not believe to be true; and now, Sir, at this very time, 1802, no one can be an Episcopalian, unless he will go to the dominant party, put off his hat, make a bow, and humbly ask them to take a certificate, and permit him to become a conscientious dissenter, otherwise he must be taxed by them. I therefore move,

That the Bishop and Clergy, and all the members of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, unite with the republicans, and vote

for Col. Ephraim Kirby, of Litchfield, to be governor, (he was for many years held up for Governor in opposition to John Cotton Smith,) he is a worthy man, a well informed Churchman, a true friend to the equal civil and religious rights and privileges of all mankind, and he would, without doubt, use his best endeavors to have those offensive laws repealed, which give to one sect or party a superiority, and which compel people by law to support them whether they believe their religion or not.

At this the bishop and some of the clergy were very much displeased; and this has been the cause of persecution, of slander and abuse, of civil prosecution, of distress, of imprisonment, of disgrace, and ruin to myself, to my children and friends.

In the first place, I was refused a seat in the convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, without hearing or trial on the ground that I did not belong to that state; which if true, was directly contrary to the canons of the church. To the next Freeman's meeting, Bishop Jarvis, at the age of about 70, forgetting his station, the honor of the church, and the good of religion, went, took the freeman's oath, joined the federal party, and voted against Col Kirby, and all others of his own communion if they happened to be on the re-

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publican interest. At this I felt myself and the church insulted and abused, and thought it my duty to attend to my own parishes, and have but little to do with any thing else. The churches in my care prospered exceedingly. Their house of worship in Branford was completely repaired and finished. The church in East-Haven was also repaired and finished. The church in Northford, which had remained ever since before the revolutionary war in a state of decay, was now repaired and finished. The church in Wallingford, at this time, sent to Boston and purchased an excellent organ. In Durham, where the service of the church had never been performed until I went there, about 80 of the taxable inhabitants certificated and joined the Episcopal church under my care; they had procured books of common prayer, and performed the service remarkably well. But this prosperity only excited jealousy and opposition in the minds of those who ought to have befriended me. Bishop Jarvis visited them, and without their knowledge, placed the Rev. Mr. Merriam there, as their officiating minister, whereby I was precluded preaching there without his consent. No sooner was this known, than a meeting was called and he was dismissed. During this time, means were used to divide my parishes, by exciting distrust and opposition in the minds of my hearers, and by giving the Presbyterian federal party to understand that I was not in good standing. I and my people claimed that I was in good standing; and that the opposition to me was an infringement upon the established order of the church, and that it was occasioned by presbyterian federal politics. A petition from the church in Branford, in East-Haven, in Northford, in Wallingford, and in Durham, was presented to the convention of the Episcopal church of Connecticut, convened in Danbury, in June, 1803; and another petition signed by the Rev. Dr. Mansfield of Derby, the Rev. Mr. Tyler of Norwich, the Rev. Mr. Blakelee of East-Hadam, the Rev. Mr. Todd of Huntington, the Rev. Mr. Miles of Chatham, and the Rev. Mr. Warren of Middletown, was presented to the same convention, in which they also stated their knowledge of me, of my character and standing in the church, of the union and uncommon prosperity of the churches in my care, and prayed the bishop and clergy to be

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reconciled to me, or to bring forward their accusations, if any they had. In answer to which, the bishop arose, and standing within the rails of the altar, and near the communion table, in the church in Danbury, and as president of the convention in 1803, declared and said, "We (meaning the bishop and clergy) have nothing against Mr. Rogers, we acknowledge his character and his authority to be good and on receiving

a single line from the Bishop of New-York, we would receive him with open arms." The whole controversy is now brought to a single point, and that a mere matter of civility or etiquette, a single line from the Bishop of N. York. See the proof.

I, Samuel J. Andrews, of Derby, in the county of New-Haven, and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, do testify and say, that I was at the convention of the Bishop, Clergy, and Laity of the Episcopal church, holden at Danbury in June last; that in said convention I heard the Bishop, while acting as president of the same, declare that we, meaning the bishop and clergy, have nothing against Mr. Rogers; we acknowledge his authority and character to be good; and that on receiving a single line from the bishop of New York, we would receive him with open arms, or words to that effect. And further saith not.

SAMUEL J. ANDREWS.

New-Haven County, ss. Derby, Jan. 5th, 1804.

Personally appeared Samuel J. Andrews, who hath subscribed the foregoing affidavit, and made solemn oath that the same contains the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as relative to the subject matter thereof. Before me,

JOSIAH DUDLEY, Justice of the Peace.

I hereby certify, that I was a delegate in the convention holden in Danbury, in June, 1803, and am personally knowing, that the facts stated in the foregoing affidavit of Samuel J. Andrews, are correct and true.

JOSIAH DUDLEY.

Here is a public and official assurance given by bishop Jarvis, in behalf of himself and clergy, given as president of the convention of the state, and solemnly given at the communion table, that my authority and my character were good; and a solemn pledge, that, on receiving a single line from the Bishop of New-York, (my republicanism notwithstanding,) he would receive me into the convention with open arms; but

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it is supposed that he had sent to his good friend, Dr. Beach, to prevent that line. This requirement was a total departure from the established order of the Episcopal church—it was what, at that time, had never been required of any other clergyman. LETTERS OF ORDERS, which I had, were always sufficient vouchers of a clergyman's character and standing, until he had been regularly impeached and tried: but here was nothing to be tried for. My character and authority were good and there was nothing against me. I was not a stranger; I was settled by the unanimous vote of the parishes in the towns and neighborhood where I was born and brought up, and where I had been recommended to be ordained at first. But unreasonable, unconstitutional, and uncanonical as the demand was, for peace sake, my friends were determined to comply with it; and accordingly the Rev. Dr. Mansfield and the Rev. Ambrose Todd wrote to the Bishop of New-York, and received from him the following line, viz.

To the Rev. Richard Mansfield, D. D. Derby, Conn.

New-York, June 13th 1803.

REV. SIR—

In compliance with the request contained in a letter which I lately received from you and the Rev. Mr. Todd, I have to observe, that during the residence of Mr. Rogers in the state of New-York, this diocese was under the direction of my predecessor, Dr. Provoost—that I never heard Bishop Provoost express any sentiment of disapprobation with regard to Mr. Rogers; nor was there at any time or on any occasion, a complaint brought up against him before the convention of the church in this state. With great respect, I remain, Rev. Sir, your faithful friend and servant,

BENJAMIN MOORE.

This line was presented to Bishop Jarvis in New-Haven, by me, in presence of a committee of the church in Branford, East-Haven, Northford, Wallingford, and Durham, and was by him (his public and official promise notwithstanding) rejected—he said, on the ground that there was no communication from the standing committee of the church in that state; but it was really because I was opposed to a union of church and state. I was now determined to meet him on his own ground, and for that purpose, went into the state of New-

York, and obtained the following certificate from the standing committee of the church there, viz.

To the Right Reverend the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese of Connecticut, or any other whom it may concern.

This may certify, that the Rev. Ammi Rogers was considered as a regular ordained minister of the protestant Episcopal church, in the state of New-York, and that he was constantly a member of the Convention of this state during his residence here, and in good standing, and that no complaint was at any time brought against him. Dated Sept. 27, 1803.

Signed,

THEODOSIUS BARTOW, Rector of Trinity church, N. Roch.

ELIAS COOPER, Rector of St. John's church, Yonkers.

JOHN CHARLTON, Member of the Standing Committee of the Convention of the Church in New-York.

MATTHEW CLARKSON, do.

WILLIAM OGDEN, do.

RICHARD HARRISON, do.

The foregoing line from the bishop of New-York, and the foregoing certificate from the standing committee of the church in that state, were presented to bishop Jarvis in Derby, by Josiah Dudley, Esq. who was a member of the convention in the state of Connecticut, and were by bishop Jarvis rejected, on the pretended ground that the line from the bishop of New-York was not official. Then I went again to New-York, and obtained the following official line from the bishop of New-York.

"To the Right Rev. Abraham Jarvis, D. D. Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the state of Connecticut.

"I do hereby certify, that the Rev. Ammi Rogers left the state of New-York before my consecration to the office of a bishop, and consequently was never placed under my jurisdiction; that during the time of his residence in this diocese, he constantly attended the conventions of the church, and that in those conventions no complaint was ever preferred against him, nor did he at any time, or on any occasion fall under the censure of the ecclesiastical authority.

BENJAMIN MOORE, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the state of New-York.
January 17th, 1804.

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The foregoing official line was presented to bishop Jarvis by capt. Nathaniel Webb of Stamford, and what could he require more? his word and honor as bishop, and as president of the Episcopal church in Connecticut were pledged; the honor of the whole church in the state was pledged, but, alas! alas! he now throws off the mask—he breaks through all former engagements, and declares, "*that a man who will make religion not only the servant, but the very scullion of a political faction, (meaning the republicans,) who are endeavoring to root all religion and authority out of the state, I am determined to have nothing to do with.*" He himself had made religion not only the servant, but the very scullion of the Presbyterian federal party, who were rising against the measures of our general government, and endeavoring to preserve a religious establishment in Connecticut, which I sincerely believe to be inconsistent with the equal rights of other denominations.

On the very next week after bishop Jarvis received the foregoing line from the bishop of New-York, he got some of the clergy, who were of his party, together in Litchfield, and in the night, without granting a hearing or trial, and actually without my knowledge, issued and published a paper, *forbidding me to preach in Connecticut.* Against this paper I issued and published a solemn protest, and declared it to be without authority, and of no force, because it was issued without the previous steps required by the authority of God's word, and the constitution and canons of the Episcopal church to which I belonged; because it was a violation of his most solemn vows of office, upon the condition of which he was ordained and made a bishop; because to issue a paper against any man without hearing or trial, and actually without his knowledge, was a violation of all civil and religious compact, was dis-

graceful to his office, was cruel, tyrannical, and oppressive in the highest degree—and because the paper issued by bishop Jarvis against me, was a manifest and shameful violation of his word, and solemn assurance given to me, and to my people, and to the world, as bishop of the state, and as president of the convention of the church, in Danbury, in 1803. On the same grounds, the wardens and vestry, and ninety-one of

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the members of the church in Stamford, issued and published their solemn protest against the paper of bishop Jarvis issued against me, and declared it without authority and void. On the same grounds, the church in Branford, in East Haven, in Northford, and in many other places issued and published their solemn protest against the said paper issued against me, and declared it wholly without authority and void.

At this time, I had removed from Branford to Stamford, and had, by the unanimous vote of that parish, become their minister. And here I make a solemn appeal to the conscience of every person who had lived under my ministry in the state of Connecticut, or of New York: have I not diligently read and expounded the holy scriptures of the old and new testament, as opportunity offered? have I not endeavoured to fashion my own life and others, according to the doctrine of Christ, and to make myself a wholesome example to his flock? have I not always reverently obeyed my bishop in all things which were according to the authority of God's word, and the canons of the church, and submitted myself to his godly judgment, founded on the same? have I not faithfully endeavoured to banish and drive away from the church all erroneous and strange doctrines which were contrary to God's word? have I not been diligent in prayers, in reading the holy scriptures, and studying the same, and in administering the sacraments, laying aside the study of the world and of the flesh? have I not endeavoured to set forward quietness, peace, and love among all christian people, and especially among those who were committed to my charge? and were your congregations ever larger, were the people ever more edified, were your parishes ever more prosperous, than while in my care? and where is the person, man or woman, who will say that to them, and in their presence, I have not conducted like a gentleman and a christian? even the false witnesses themselves, on whose account I have suffered imprisonment, and the loss of all things, have constantly declared my innocence, except while under the influence of my personal, political, and religious enemies.

"O, Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee, grant that the

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ministers and stewards of thy holy mysteries, may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient unto the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world, we may be found acceptable in thy sight; and grant, O merciful father, that thy people may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also that they may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen."

Hear me Lord Jesus, not according to the imperfections of my own petitions, but according to the full meaning of that perfect form of words, which thou thyself in great mercy hast taught and expressly commanded. that when we did pray, we should say,

Our Father who art in heaven, &c.

CHAPTER V.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

From the aforesaid paper, issued and published against me by bishop Jarvis, I appealed to the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, assembled in the city of New York, 1804, by way of Petition, and after stating my case, prayed them to decide, 1st, to which state I

did canonically belong : 2d, that a paper, issued and published by Bishop Jarvis, against me, without hearing or trial, and wholly without my knowledge; contrary to the authority of God's word and the established order of the Episcopal church; inconsistent with his most solemn vows of office, and in violation of his word and honor, publicly pledged as bishop, and as president of the Convention of the Church in Connecticut, might be recalled; and 3d, that if any one had whereof to accuse me, I might be served with a copy of all and every charge, together with the proof, and that I might have a reasonable time to prepare and defend myself—meaning according to the canons of the church in that state to which they should decide I belonged.

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Bishop Jarvis was a member of this House of Bishops, and a judge in his own case; common delicacy would have induced him to withdraw, but he did not. The clerical delegates from Connecticut were admitted to a hearing, and I was called in. They stated that I had called two conventions in Connecticut, one in Wallingford, and one in Branford, and that I had invited some of the leading democrats in Connecticut to attend, and was endeavouring to encourage democracy and to oppose the Bishop. I denied that I had ever called any convention in Connecticut, other than a meeting of the people in my own particular care; or that I ever had used any undue influence in politics, and that I was so far from opposing the Bishop, that I had for the peace of the church, obtained documents from New-York, such as had never been required from any other clergyman, such as he was not authorised by any canon of the church to require, and such as the bishop and committee of New York were not authorized to give. They then brought on the matter respecting Mr. Perry's certificate, see page 19. This certificate was taken from among my papers in Derby, the year before, without my knowledge or consent, and now they denied that there ever was such a paper. I remonstrated against any trial, except in the state to which I did belong, and according to the canons. I remonstrated against calling that up against me as a Priest which took place before I was a Deacon; against permitting a matter to remain 12 or 14 years which was censurable, and then after my witnesses were dead, and when it was impossible to bring forward any living testimony, to bring it up against me, that it was hard, it was unjust; besides the matter had been fully inquired into in the time of it, by bishop Provoost, who was the proper authority, and was dismissed by him as unworthy of notice. Bishop Jarvis handed to the delegates who were present from Connecticut, a number of papers, among which was a letter from Samuel Woodruff, Esq. and they laid them before the House of Bishops. *I requested counsel and was refused*—the House adjourned. At evening I called and requested to see some of the papers which were handed in against me: whereupon they *resolved that nothing shall be done in the business except in the presence*

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of both parties." I then addressed a letter to the Right Rev. Bishop White, President of the House of Bishops in New-York, in Sept. 1814, and objected to any decision or determination of the said House of Bishops relative to me, any farther forth than as it respected the diocese to which I did canonically belong, that I might meet the charges, if any there were, according to the constitution and canons of the church; and then immediately left the city and state of New York. After I was gone, and when both parties were not present, they formed and published an opinion founded on falsehood and misrepresentation, relative to that certificate and my conduct in Connecticut, which was represented as highly dishonourable; but at the same time decided on the first point, that I was a clergyman not of New York, but properly of Connecticut, and that it was to them that I was exclusively amenable. On the 2d point, as astonishing as it may seem, they approved of the conduct of Bishop Jarvis in Connecticut, i. e. *I suppose*

he approved of his own doings. On the 3d point, they directed documents to be furnished to both parties, as a ground of trial in Connecticut.

The very next month I sent in my petition to the bishop and clergy of Connecticut, praying for a trial according to the canons of the church, on what they had alledged against me in New York; and at the same time I sent in articles of complaint on the uncanonical, immoral and wicked conduct of Bishop Jarvis, and pledged myself to prove them, if they would give me an opportunity. My petition was not acted on, and Bishop Jarvis, again without hearing or trial, and without my knowledge, issued and published another paper, founded on the misrepresentations which he himself and his party had made to the House of Bishops in New York, and which they had referred to Connecticut for trial. My articles of complaint remain with the Secretary to this day, untried and uninvestigated.

Soon after this last paper of Bishop Jarvis was published, a meeting of the Episcopal Society of St. John's church in Stamford, was legally warned, to call and settle a minister; and by a vote of this meeting I was called, received, and ac-

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knowledgeed to be the regular, ordained, and settled minister and rector of St. John's church in Stamford, and they agreed to pay me at the rate of \$558 a year, during my natural life, any order, determination, or decree of the bishop and clergy to the contrary notwithstanding. About one hundred lawful voters of that parish were in favour of this vote, and 7 against it. These 7, except one, were near relations and family connexions of Bishop Jarvis; they claimed that they, seven, were the society, and owned the church and property; and that the hundred had, by their vote *ipso facto* ceased to be churchmen, and had forfeited all right and title to the church and property.

On this ground they sued me at law, for trespass, in going into their church and preaching, after the bishop had forbid me. On trial I claimed that the bishop had no authority to forbid any clergyman, or to silence or degrade him. It was then incumbent on the plaintiff to shew what authority the bishop had; and to do this the bishop's vows of office, on condition of which he was made a bishop, and the constitution and canons of the church, must be introduced in the court.

Before any person can be made a bishop in the United States, he must make this promise, viz. "*In the name of God, Amen.*" I, A—— J—— "chosen bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church" (in Connecticut, or whatever state it may be,) "do promise conformity and obedience to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: So help me God through Jesus Christ."

Among other things, he promises, "that he will, by the help of God, diligently exercise such discipline as the authority of God's word, and by the order" (that is, by the constitution and canons) "of this church is committed to him." In confirmation of this oath and promise, he takes the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and on these conditions with others, he is ordained and made a bishop;—(see the consecration of bishops in the book of Common Prayer.) By this the bishop has no authority to exercise any discipline, to forbid, silence, degrade, or even to censure any

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clergyman without the previous steps required by the authority of God's word, and the constitution and canons of the Episcopal church. The authority of God's word is, "if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone," (Matth. 18th chapter); "Against an elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses," (Tim. 5th chapter.)

The constitution of the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States—"Article 6th. In every state the mode of trying clergymen shall be instituted by the convention of the

church therein," &c. "Article 4th, Every bishop of this church shall confine the exercise of his Episcopal office to his own proper diocese or district."

CANONS made by the convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, on the first Wednesday in June, 1798, in conformity to the 6th article of the constitution of the Episcopal church in the United States.

CANON 3d. *Offences for which a clergyman may be brought to trial in Connecticut*—Disorderly and immoral conduct, neglect of duty, disregarding the constitution and canons of the church, or disseminating or countenancing opinions which are contrary to its doctrines, are offences for which a clergyman may be brought to trial.

CANON 4th. *The mode of trying a clergyman in Connecticut*.—If a minister offend in any of these respects, application in writing, signed by his accusers, shall be sent in the first instance to the standing committee, and if it appears to them that there is ground for the charge, they shall report thereupon to the bishop, who shall call a convention of his clergy, not less than seven, and after a full hearing, and fair trial and examination, the bishop with the advice of the clergy present, shall pronounce sentence against him.

BEFORE THE HON. JUDGE DAVENPORT, IN
CONNECTICUT.

NATHANIEL WEBB AND OTHERS vs. AMMI ROGERS.

This is an action of trespass, in which the plaintiffs demand of the defendant, damage and their cost, for going into their church in Stamford, in Connecticut, and performing ministerial duties, after he was degraded and forbidden by the bishop.

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"And the defendant did offer then to prove in court, by the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, who had long been, and at and long before the time of rendering said sentence of degradation, was and still is secretary of the convention of the diocese of this state, one of the standing committee thereof—that no application in writing was ever made to the said standing committee, against or concerning the said Ammi Rogers; and that no report had ever been made against said Rogers by any standing committee, as is required in said 4th Canon; and that no trial of said Rogers was ever had by any convention of clergy in this state. The defendant claimed that the said testimony of said Baldwin was admissible to shew that said bishop had no power to degrade the defendant at the time of issuing and pronouncing the same. To which the plaintiffs did object, on the ground that the said bishop and clergy are a court ecclesiastical, with competent power and authority; and they only having jurisdiction to try, condemn and degrade any of the clergy belonging to the diocese of Connecticut, and that their decision is final and cannot be inquired into by the courts of law of civil jurisdiction; which testimony of said Baldwin was adjudged by this court to be admissible—and the same was heard, and went to prove, and the court found the facts from him claimed by the defendant to be true"—[and the said Rogers is not silenced nor degraded, but has full power and authority to go into the church, to preach, to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to marry, and to perform all the duties pertaining to his office as a priest in full orders and in good standing in the Protestant Episcopal church."]

The foregoing is truly extracted from the bill of exceptions, [before the superior court in Fairfield county] in the case of Nathaniel Webb and others vs. Ammi Rogers, dated May 28th, 1805. Examined by me,

EBENEZER DAVENPORT, Justice of the Peace."

"The bishop's party sued me nine times for this same trespass, and there was seldom a day, for almost eight years, when I was not harassed, persecuted, and distressed with these vexatious and unreasonable law suits. I was attacked in the most spiteful manner, and brought before justices courts,

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county courts, superior courts, of courts of error, and in every instance I beat them, and recovered my cost, or they withdrew their suit and paid their own cost. They never did at

any time, or on any occasion, recover from me so much as one cent, or prove any thing to my dishonor or disadvantage, though they examined with the most malicious intentions into the most private passages of my whole life. I was obliged to attend court four and six times a year, at a distance of twenty or twenty-five miles, with my lawyers and witnesses, and prepared for trial; and towards the end of the court they would get the case continued or appeal, or withdraw and sue again, or I would beat them. Their object was, without doubt, to run me down, and to run out my property. If the reader ask why was all this hatred, animosity, and contention? I answer, not because I had committed any crime, not because I was not a clergyman in regular and good standing, and in love and friendship with my own people; and the bishop himself had acknowledged my character and authority to be good, (see page 39); but I was a republican in principle, I was opposed to a union of church and state—I was opposed to compelling people by force of law to support that which they did not believe to be true, or to acknowledge themselves dissenters from those who are dissenters themselves. In Connecticut every settled congregational presbyterian minister can send his collector and take any man's horse from under him, or his oxen, or cows, or hogs, or any property which he possesses, unless he has signed off, and can sell it at the post without suing him, or granting him a hearing. I have known them take even a man's Bible, and sell it at the post to pay the minister's tax. I have known Episcopalians, Baptists and others, actually locked up and confined in a filthy disgraceful jail, in Connecticut, merely because they would not, or could not in conscience pay their money to support that which they did not believe to be true. I could mention the persons, times and places. But I presume that no one acquainted in Connecticut will deny the fact. Can it then be any wonder if these same people should join with Bishop Jarvis, and cause me to be sued nine times for the same pretended trespass, keep me eight years in law, and finally on the charge of crimes which

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never were committed, disgrace, imprison, and ruin me and my innocent children and friends.

NATHANIEL WEBB AND OTHERS vs. AMMI ROGERS.

An extract of the deposition of the Rev. Philo Shelton, before the Superior Court, in Fairfield county, Connecticut.

QUESTION. Are you a member of the standing committee of the Episcopal church in this state, and have you been such for many years last past, and at the time Bishop Jarvis issued his sentences against the defendant.

Ans. Yes.

QUESTION. Was there ever a complaint or application made in writing, signed by accusers, against the defendant, as is required by the 6th article of the general ecclesiastical constitution, and the 4th canon of the Episcopal church in this state. [See page 49.]

Ans. No.

QUESTION. Did the standing committee aforesaid, ever report a complaint against or concerning the defendant, as is required by the aforesaid constitution and canons?

Ans. No.

QUESTION. Did Bishop Jarvis ever call a convention of the clergy on account of the defendant, and grant him, the said defendant, a full hearing and fair trial, according to the aforesaid constitution and canons?

Ans. No.

QUESTION. Did not the house of bishops in New-York, September, 1804, determine that the defendant was exclusively amenable to the authority of the Episcopal church in Connecticut.

Ans. Yes.

I certify that the foregoing is a true extract of the deposition of the Rev. Philo Shelton, before the superior court in Fairfield county, in the year 1806.

DAVID BURR, CLERK OF SAID COURT.

N. B. Look at the Bishop's vows of office—how solemnly did he promise and swear, that he would exercise such discipline as by the authority of God's word and the constitution and canons of this church is committed to him! did he not take

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the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to confirm this oath and promise! and awfully wicked must he be who would destroy the whole order of the church!

NATHANIEL WEBB AND OTHERS vs. AMMI ROGERS.

Before the Superior Court of Connecticut in Fairfield County, 1806.

William White D. D. Bishop of the P. E. Church in Pennsylvania, deposed and saith—That he was a member and president of the House of Bishops in the city of New-York. in September, 1804; That he did not consider the House of Bishops as exercising discipline on Ammi Rogers, when they gave their opinion in his case at that time. That in his opinion it does not come within the province of the House of Bishops to try, judge or in any way condemn a Clergyman who is exclusively amenable to the authority of the Diocese of Connecticut. That he did not consider the House of Bishops as enjoining any duty on Bishop Jarvis, or requiring from him any act, but only as expressing an opinion to be communicated to said Rogers and those clergymen who had appeared against him before the Bishops; that to the best of his recollection the said Rogers did object both in words and in writing to any decision of the house of bishops relative to him any further forth than as it respected the diocese to which he did canonically belong, where he might have time to collect his witnesses and shew the falsity of any charges which had or might be brought against him.

Subscribed and sworn in the city of Philadelphia on the 26th of July 1806, before

RICHARD PALMER, *Justice of the Peace*.

Benjamin Moore, D. D. Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York—Deposeth and saith, That he was a member of the general Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, held in the city of New-York, in the month of September, A. D. 1804. That certain matters were brought before the house of Bishops, for their consideration by the Rev. Ammi Rogers, &c. That in regard to what authority is Mr. Rogers amenable? the house of Bishops were of opinion, that he was *exclusively* amenable to the authority of the Church in Connecticut—and moreover, it appeared to

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this deponent to be the wish and intention of the house of Bishops to refer the said Ammi Rogers to the authority of the Church in Connecticut, that he might be proceeded against according to the constitution and canons of the Church, and that the opinion delivered by the house of Bishops, was not considered by them as judicial, but the case of Mr. Rogers was referred to the authority of the Church in Connecticut FOR A TRIAL.

BENJAMIN MOORE.

City, County, and State of New-York, ss. July 22, A. D. 1806. Then and there personally appeared Benjamin Moore, the above named deponent, who subscribed and made solemn oath to the foregoing deposition in due form of law, before me.

A. C. VAN SLYKE, *Justice of the Peace*.

Bishop Moore and Bishop White solemnly swear that the case of Mr. Rogers was referred to Connecticut for a trial.—Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Shelton solemnly swear that that trial has never been granted.

To the Rev. Ammi Rogers, Hebron, Tolland county, Connecticut.

Stamford, Jan. 31, 1818.

REV. SIR—

I received yours of the 14th inst. and now inform you that the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Burhans is still fresh in my memory. He came to the house of Mr. Quintard, where you boarded, with the Rev. Mr. Todd, and I was there, to confer with me, as one of the wardens of the church, for your dismission. I informed them, that the parish had never been

more united and pleased with any minister than they were with you, that a minister was generally best known by his own parishioners, that if they had any thing against you, they ought to state it in your presence and give you an opportunity of making your defence, and unless they would do this, I should have nothing to do with them. They informed me that bishop Jarvis would not consent to that. You then attacked Mr. Burhans about the certificate of Mr. Perry of Newtown; you asked him how he could inform Mr. Butler that there was no such certificate, that it was all a lie, and a sham, and a forgery, when he had at that very time, the certificate in his own possession concealed, and had acknowledged before the Rev. Dr. Mansfield, and others, that he knew it to be the hand-writing of Mr. Perry; that he knew it as well as he

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did his own, and could swear to it. At this Mr. Burhans walked off without making any reply. Mr. Todd remained some time, and said he was sensible that you had been treated with great and cruel injustice; that he was sorry for it, and would do every thing in his power to have it settled. The next morning I was present, when he brought Mr. Burhans to you, at Mr. Quintard's, who then confessed to you, that he had been to blame about that certificate; that he did not blame you for being offended with him; that he had done wrong, and was sorry for it, and asked you to forgive him; that the certificate was yours and you should have it; he had it not with him, but you should have it in a fortnight; that he took it by accident or mistake, and when he spoke to Mr. Butler about it, he did not know that he had it. This I think took place in 1805. [Mr. Quintard, his family, and others, were present.] The certificate not being returned for several months, it was advertised in the newspaper printed in Danbury, and broad hints were given that it would soon be called for by the authority of the state, for that it had been taken from Mr. Rogers in a clandestine and felonious manner, and kept from him three years, and to his great injury. That soon after this advertisement, the said Burhans came to my house with two others, you being out of town at that time, and presented to me the said certificate for you. I told him I should have nothing to do with it; that I did not know the hand-writing, and should give no receipt for it. He said that it was the same certificate which Mr. Perry gave you, that he knew it to be his hand-writing, that he did not take it of his own accord or by mistake, for it was given to him before witnesses to keep, by Mr. Baldwin, and it was done by Bishop Jarvis's order, and he would let me know it. I then received the said certificate from Mr. Burhans, and delivered the same to you. He then having the newspaper in his pocket, containing the advertisement, took it out and demanded from me, if I was the author of that piece signed with my name. I told him the paper would speak for itself, and he might make what use of it he pleased. So we parted; with pleasure to me, for I did not wish to be in company with a man of his profession, who would tell so many different stories on the same subject, and which would clash so hard. It certainly must be a bad cause which would require such means to support it. It looked so much like lying, which is a thing that I always despise, in any man, but more especially in a clergyman, and it came within my own personal knowledge too, that I never can forget it. Thus I have given you a short but true account of the affair as it took place at that time, and I am, Rev. Sir, with sentiments of great respect, your sincere friend.

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CARY LEEDS.

Mr. Leeds is a man of large property, of good moral character, has for many years been one of the wardens of the Episcopal church in Stamford, and is as much to be believed as any man in that town. How unjust, how cruel, mean, and dishonorable was it to take that certificate from me without my knowledge or consent, to keep it concealed for three years, deny that there ever was any such certificate; get me

disgraced for the want of it, and now call upon the whole Episcopal church and others to support them in their wickedness. Is there a gang of the meanest miscreants on earth, is there a gang of highway robbers, who would treat one of their comrades worse than this? and are not those who would knowingly uphold them as bad as they are!!

After having been sued nine times for the same pretended trespass, and harassed, persecuted and distressed for almost eight years, I sued Nathaniel Webb and others for distressing me with vexatious and unreasonable law suits, and after a full hearing and a fair trial, and able counsel on both sides, before the Superior Court in Fairfield, in Connecticut, on the 29th day of December, 1809, I recovered a verdict of \$600, against them; but this was but a small part of the real money which I had actually paid, besides my time and trouble. The papers were returned and the case was afterwards privately settled.

To the Rev. Tillotson Bronson, D. D. President of the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.
Glastenbury, April 17, 1815.

REV. SIR—

We received yours of the 13th ult. and have noticed the contents. In our first communication to you, we wished to

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be unequivocally informed: has there ever been any complaint, hearing, or trial of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, according to the canons of the church in this state or any other? Your answer was NO. and at the same time informed us that Mr. Rogers had applied to the House of Bishops, in 1804, and that he was actually tried, and by them condemned; and considering their vows of office, and the established order and security of the Episcopal church, we could not withhold our astonishment! But on further inquiry we found, that bishop White and Bishop Moore had, each of them, under the solemnity of an oath, before a court of law, contradicted your information, and testified that Mr. Rogers had not been tried nor condemned by them, and that they had no cognizance of his case—and we were led to believe that Bishop Jarvis's papers against Mr. Rogers, were a solemn mockery, a farce and an imposition; or that the said bishops had perjured themselves. But to be certain on the subject we wrote to you again, and requested you to inform us: 1st. By what authority did bishop Jarvis issue his papers against Mr. Rogers without hearing or trial, according to the canons of the church, in this state, or any other? 2d. Who has constituted the house of bishops a tribunal to try any clergyman? 3d. Is any clergyman to be considered unworthy or degraded except in consequence of a trial according to the canons of the church in that state to which he belongs? We expected that as a gentleman, as a christian and as president of the standing committee, on whom, you say, it devolves to give the necessary information, you would have informed us; but you have thought proper to shrink from these inquiries. Whether it was because you had not goodness enough to confess and retract, or because you wished us to sanction and carry into effect that which you and we knew to be wrong, we do not know; but this we do know, that you have not answered our inquiries. You say if there has been an error, the House of Bishops are the only proper authority to correct it. This surely must be a mere put off, for you cannot be insensible that he did apply to them in 1808, and that then they and the general convention decided, that he was exclusively amenable to the authority of the church in Con-

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necticut; and that by the 6th article of the constitution which secures to every clergyman in the United States the privilege of being tried according to the canons of the church in that state to which he belongs, they had no cognizance of his case. Why then do you refer him to them? But we have written to bishop White on the subject and received his answer, dated Philadelphia, March 8. 1815, in which he says, "When the bishops, during the said convention, went on the

business referred to, it was for the purpose of giving their opinion on the question, whether Mr. Rogers belonged to the church in Connecticut, or to that in New-York.—Soon after the convention had arisen, bishop Moore and I were asked, whether we considered what had passed as a trial of Mr. Rogers, and we both declared we did not, and there was no other bishop present, except Dr. Parker, who in the mean time has departed this life." Now, Sir, if we compare this with your information to us, what shall we think, what shall we believe, what shall we know? If the whole proceedings against Mr. Rogers have been wholly unauthorized and void, we wish you and the standing committee to declare it; if they have been according to the authority of God's Word, and the constitution and canons of the church; shew us wherein, by referring to chapter and verse, to article and canon. This, as guardians of the church, as gentlemen and as christians, you will not refuse to do. Please to lay this before the standing committee, as soon as opportunity will permit, and favor us with their answer, and in so doing you will much oblige your humble servants.

John Cleaver, Roger Hale, Alexander Holleston,
James Robinson, David Robinson, Jared Goodrich,
Ezra Dayton, Henry Jones, Samuel Taylor, 2d.
Gideon Hale, Daniel Andrews,

The above named gentlemen were the wardens and vestrymen of the church in Glastenbury, a few miles below the city of Hartford, and are among the first for respectability in that town. Mr. John Cleaver, who was one of the wardens and a very respectable man, took the most unwearied pains to have the clergy come forward with their complaint, if any they had, for my parishes were all perfectly in my favor. The only thing pretended was that certificate of Mr. Perry,

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[See page 19.] but they dare not bring it into trial, for it took place before I was even a deacon, and it had already been dismissed by bishop Provoost as unworthy of notice: but was it no crime in them to take it from me, without my knowledge or consent? was it no crime to keep it concealed for three years, to deny that there ever was any such certificate, while at the same time they had it in their possession, concealed; and taken without my knowledge? was there no crime in all this? Yet they will hang together, and get the people to support them, and to despise me if they can! But their real objection was the motion made in Hartford, 1802. [See page 38.] It was because I was opposed to a union of church and state, because I thought it wrong to invest any ecclesiastical tribunal with civil and military power: but it would have been unpopular, and they dare not bring it forward as a complaint. A clergyman is generally best known in his own parish and among his neighbors; and my parishes were perfectly united in me, even the seven who sued me, declared that they had not any thing personally against me, and that if the bishop and clergy were satisfied with me, they should be; but the fact is, I dared to deny, that they had any authority, except according to the constitution and canons of the church.

After Bishop Jarvis had issued his papers against me, and I was settled in Stamford, as before stated; he called a number of his clergy together in that place, and sent to the wardens of the church for the key; they replied that the key was in the possession of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, their rector: that if they wanted it they must apply to him. Bishop Jarvis then addressed a letter to Mr. Ammi Rogers in Stamford, directing the key to be given to the bearer. I returned an answer, that I knew no such man in Stamford as Mr. Ammi Rogers; that if he wanted the key of the church, he must apply to the proper officer, with the title of his office. The key was not given up, and they held their meeting in the school-house, at a few rods distance from the church. At this school-house, Bishop Jarvis himself, the Rev. Mr. Burhans, and some others, had frequent meetings, while the door of the church was shut against them. Their

object appeared to be, to divide the affections of my people, and to carry into effect the bishop's papers, by propagating slander and abusive reports; and in this way to lessen my reputation and influence, at home and abroad, as much as possible. *And if a bishop and clergy shall undertake to destroy a man's character, no innocence, no virtue, no integrity, can stand before them!* After I had recovered a verdict of \$500, before the superior court, for vexatious and unreasonable law suits, I left Connecticut, and moved into Greenfield, in the county of Saratoga, and state of New-York, where I, had formerly been acquainted; and collected a congregation, organized a church, had it incorporated according to law, and was settled there as their rector. I then brought a suit against bishop Jarvis for slander, before the circuit court of the United States, to be holden in New-Haven, in Connecticut, in April, 1811. Here I was prepared to support my character and standing, from the town where I was born, from every place where I had resided, and from every parish of which I had the charge. But although I had taken the words of my declaration, in writing, from the mouths of my witnesses, before I brought the suit; yet now, they being in the neighborhood of bishop Jarvis, and of his federal friends, and in my absence out of the state, they could not be made to remember any thing which he had said against me; I could not prove the words of my declaration, and was obliged, at a great expense, to withdraw my suit. Soon after, bishop Jarvis went into the city of New-York, I pursued him, and there arrested him with a supreme writ for \$20,000 damages, in issuing papers against me, without authority, thereby causing me, my children, and friends, to be disgraced, and unjustly distressed; causing me to be harrassed and put at great expense with vexatious and unreasonable law suits; distressing my parishes, breaking up my settlements, &c.

After I had sued bishop Jarvis in 1811, before the supreme court in the state of New-York, I was employed, and took charge of the Episcopal church in Saybrook, Conn. and preached a part of the time in Pleasant Valley in Lime, and remained there until 1813. In April, 1813, my case against bishop Jarvis was brought before the court. The questions

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were, 1st, Did the defendant issue papers against the plaintiff? The papers were ready in court to be produced. 2d, Had the defendant any authority, civil or ecclesiastical, to issue and publish those papers in the manner and under the circumstances in which he did? Courts of law of competent jurisdiction in the state of Connecticut, had already decided that he had not. 3d, What is the damage in this case, special and exemplary? While this case was depending, and before a decision was obtained, bishop Jarvis died, and the case died with him. Thus the matter ended so far.

In the year 1808, I went to Baltimore, in the state of Maryland, and presented my petition to the general convention of the Episcopal church, then sitting there, complaining of bishop Jarvis, for issuing and publishing papers against me, without hearing or trial; without my knowledge, and contrary to the canons of the church; and praying to have them revoked and declared void, as they were. Humble petitions from the church in Branford, in East Haven, in Northford, in Wallingford, in Durham, in Woodbridge, in Salem part of Waterbury, in the north society in Derby, in Stamford, in Greenwich, in New Canaan, all in the state of Connecticut: and from the church in Ballston, in Milton, and in Charlton, in the state of New-York, to the same amount; and stating their knowledge and approbation of me and of my character, were also presented to the general convention at the same time. Whereupon it was resolved, that neither the general convention nor any bishop has the cognizance, of the conduct of any minister, except in the diocese to which he belongs, and conformably to the canons, by the convention of the church in that diocese, prescribed. This was the amount, if not the very words, of their resolution. But to afford the redress prayed for, the House of Bishops, in their pastoral

letter to every member of the Episcopal church in the United States, issued and published at that time, (1808) declared the established principle of the church on this point in page 15 and 16, viz.

"The church has made provision for the degradation of unworthy clergymen. It is for us to suppose that there are none of that description, until the contrary is made known

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to us, in our respective places, in the manner prescribed by the canons," [i. e. *neither the Rev. Amos Rogers nor any other clergyman is to be considered silenced, unworthy, or degraded, until he has had a full hearing and fair trial according to the canons of some particular state or diocese, to which he belongs.*] "and if the contrary to what we wish is in any instance to be found," [i. e. *if Bishop Jarvis has done this thing*] "it lies on you, our clerical and lay brethren, to present such faulty conduct, although with due regard to proof, and above all, in a temper which shows the impelling motive, to be the glory of God, and the sanctity of the reputation of his church.

"While we are not conscious of any bias, which under an official call would prevent the conscientious discharge of duty, WE WISH TO BE EXPLICIT IN MAKING KNOWN TO ALL, THAT WE THINK IT DUE TO GOD AND TO HIS CHURCH, TO AVOID WHATEVER MAY SANCTION ASSUMED POWER, however desirable the end to which it may be directed," [i. e. *if Bishop Jarvis, or the House of Bishops themselves, or any bishop or person have, or shall assume, the power of declaring any clergyman silenced or degraded, without the previous steps required by the authority of God's word, and the canons of the church, even where he deserves a severe ecclesiastical censure, that of degradation from the ministry, it is due to God and to his church, to avoid, to oppose and to resist whatever may sanction or carry into effect such assumed power,*] "we have at least as weighty reasons to restrain us from judging without inquiry, and from censuring without evidence of crime; these are ends to which men of impetuous spirits would sometimes draw. But we would rather subject ourselves to the charge of indifference, however little merited, than be the means of establishing precedents, giving to slander an advantage, against which no innocence can be a shield, and leaving to no man a security, either of interest or of reputation," [i. e. *the House of Bishops would rather let the guilty go unpunished, than be the means of establishing precedents of assumed power, in declaring a clergyman unworthy and degraded without hearing or trial according to the canons of the church in that state to which he belongs; for this would be giving to slander an advantage, against which no innocence could be a shield, and it*

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would be leaving to no man a security, either of interest or of reputation."] "Although we have no reason to complain that sentiments in contrariety to these prevail among us to any considerable extent," [i. e. *no one but Bishop Jarvis has assumed this power,*] "yet we freely deliver our sentiments on this subject, in order to give us an opportunity of calling on all wise and good men, and we shall not call on them in vain, to aid us in resisting that mischievous spirit, which confounds right and wrong, in judging the character and rights of others.

Signed by order of the House of Bishops in General Convention, at Baltimore, May 23d 1812.

WILLIAM WHITE, Presiding Bishop.
JAMES WHITEHEAD, Secretary."

Attested by
Thus the papers issued against me, by Bishop Jarvis, are WHOLLY REVOKED AND DECLARED VOID by the house of Bishops, the highest ecclesiastical authority in the Episcopal church, in the United States. I am by them virtually declared a clergyman of good standing in the Episcopal church, and the conduct of bishop Jarvis, in regard to me, is reprobated in language of great justice and severity.

State of Connecticut, ss.—Tolland Co. Hebron, June, 25, 1818.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify, that we have this day carefully examined and compared an extract of the minutes of the House of Bishops, in Baltimore, in the state of Mary-

land, on the 20th day of May, 1808, which is in body, in signature, and duty, attested in the hand writing of the Rev. James Whitehead, D. D. their secretary—that on the aforesaid careful examination and comparison with the printed journal of the said House of Bishops, there are material additions, omissions and alterations in the said printed journal, all to the particular disadvantage of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, viz. the word *this*, page 22, line 14, is altered to *their* determination, and in the next line, the word *properly* is omitted. In the 23d line of the same page the word *censure* is altered into *sentence*, and in the next line the word *now* is omitted, and the words *or attention* are added, &c. entirely altering the meaning. Certified by Andrew Mann, Justice of Peace, Stewart Beebe, Justice of Peace, Payton R. Gilbert, Justice of Peace.

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Is it no crime to forge and alter the journal of the House of Bishop, and to represent them as saying and doing that to my particular disadvantage which they never did say or do? is there no crime in this? Are the Episcopal clergy calling upon all people to assist them in sanctioning these nefarious doings? and can you support them in doing it, without being as bad as they are? Do you ask, who has done this abominable thing? turn to the journal of the general connection in 1808 and you will see who, were the committee for printing the said journal, and they were my particular enemies. Do you ask, why have the bishop and clergy of Connecticut persecuted me, and refused me a seat in their convention? I answer, because they knew assuredly that I would bring these things up against them. To take from me my certificate, the evidence of my innocence, without my knowledge; to misrepresent and falsify the truth, and induce the House of Bishops, in 1804, to do the same; and in 1808 to forge and alter their journal, is certainly worse than for Mr. Davis to forge the truth to contradict a falsehood. See page 19.

In the year 1813 I removed from Saybrook and was employed to perform ministerial duties in St. Peter's church in Hebron, in Tolland county, one part of the time. I also collected a congregation, and was employed to preach a part of the time in Jewitt City, a handsome village, which was then a part of the town of Preston, and near Lisbon, but is now a part of the town of Griswold, in New London county. The next year I was employed to preach a part of the time in Poquatonic, which is a handsome village on a bay on the east side of the river Thames, ten miles from New London, on the line between the towns of Groton and Preston. In these parishes and in some other towns in that part of the state, religion and the Episcopal church were blessed and prospered exceedingly under my ministry. The congregations were large, attentive, united, and I believe were happy. The reader is desired to read a letter on this subject from the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, to the Right Rev. Bishop Hobart, in New York. The presbyterian clergy in general, and the federal part of the community were much opposed to me, re-

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ported many false and foolish stories, and represented me as silenced and degraded, the pastoral letter of the House of Bishops, and the decisions of our courts of law to the contrary notwithstanding. The Rev. Mr. Burhans, the Episcopal minister in Newtown, furnished Elder Amos Reed, near Jewitt City, with Jarvis's papers against me, and endeavoured to embark the Baptists in the controversy. Many of the clergy in the western part of the state, for reasons unknown to me, had determined to carry Jarvis's doings against me into effect; and my opposition to them naturally excited their opposition to me.

CHAPTER VI.

BISHOP HOBART IN CONNECTICUT. &c.

In the year 1816. Bishop Hobart of New-York, was request-

ed by the convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, to take charge of their churches, for the present, and to perform Episcopal duties in the state; with this request he complied; and soon after the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee of New-London, and the Rev. Mr. Tyler of Norwich, addressed to him the following letter, viz.

New-London, Oct. 10th, 1816.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR,

We deem it a duty which we owe to ourselves and to the church, but more especially to the Bishop, to express our sense of the obligation he has conferred in extending his care to the interest and welfare of the church in this diocese. We should be pleased to attend the convention at New-Haven, with our brethren, if it were practicable, and testify our acknowledgments, and welcome the bishop; but we hope and trust our absence will not be construed into a want of respect, or prevent the Bishop from visiting our churches as early as may be. Our people are looking with anxiety for the time, and we certainly feel as much anxiety for the church as

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our western brethren. And while we deem it our duty thus to apologize for our absence, we wish respectfully to suggest our feelings on a subject, in which, from our local situation, we may be supposed to feel a peculiar interest. We are located in the neighborhood of Mr. Rogers, whose standing is not, we presume, unknown to the Bishop. To dictate any mode of proceeding, is far from our intention; but we beg leave to suggest whether something cannot be done that may conciliate the feelings, and produce that unity which is so desirable, and we may say, so absolutely necessary, to the prosperity of the Episcopal church. Mr. Rogers has several churches in our neighbourhood, entirely built up (under the care of superintending Providence) by his own exertions, under all the opposing difficulties which attend him. His parishoners and many other gentlemen, as well clergy as laity, seem to doubt the constitutionality of his trial, [he never had a trial,] and the correctness of the sentence of degradation which is said to lie against him; of course the decree has not been regarded by great bodies of people. He is now performing the stated duties of a presbyter in the Episcopal church. His friends say (and we believe with strict propriety, so far as respects the churches in our neighbourhood,) that Mr. Rogers has been exemplary in his conduct, zealous in the discharge of his duty; correct in his doctrine, persevering in the cause of the church; and they most devoutly request that the bishop would advise some method, either by trial or reconciliation, by strict constitutional discipline, or by an indulgence, founded on a wish to conciliate, and a charity which inclines to mercy, where the technical rules of legal administration will permit. And, sir, when we view this unhappy misunderstanding in all its bearings, we cannot but feel a wish that the bishop would, in his wisdom, (for we are satisfied with his zeal for the promotion of the blessed Episcopal church,) devise some method by which this unhappy division may be healed, and the peace, honour and welfare of that communion to which we belong, be preserved and consummated; and the enemies of our most holy faith be deprived of their boasting. With sentiments of the most profound

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respect and dutiful submission to the direction of our ordinary, we are, Right Reverend Sir, yours, &c.

JOHN TYLER,

Rector of Christ's Church, Norwich.

SOLOMON BLAKESLEE,

Rector of St. James' Church, New-London.

I attended the convention of the Episcopal church in New-Haven, in October, 1816, when I wrote and sent to Bishop Hobart the following letter, viz.

New-Haven, Oct. 15th, 1816.

RIGHT REV. SIR,

After what has passed, with how much reason I can apply to the goodness of your disposition, to your justice, to your mercy, or to the charity of the disciple of him who hath said,

"condemn not and ye shall not be condemned," the result of this communication will in some measure evince. It was twenty-four years on the 24th day of last June, since I was ordained a DEACON, and it will be twenty two years on the 19th day of this present month, since I was ordained a PRIEST. And in entering this holy and all-important MINISTRY, I did then, and do now, humbly trust and believe that I was inwardly moved by that ever blessed Spirit of God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; that I was truly called according to the will of God and the canons of the Episcopal church; and I have, as God has enabled me, endeavoured with all faithfulness rightly and truly to administer the doctrines and sacraments of the church of God, and to make myself a wholesome example to the flock of Christ. I have administered, during my ministry, about three thousand baptisms to men, women, and children. I have upon their credible profession of faith and repentance, and an assurance of their earnest intention, by God's grace, to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, admitted to the holy communion more than five hundred persons, and administered to them the blessed sacrament of the Lord's supper. [I have administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper to more than eleven hundred different persons.] I have joined about two hundred persons in holy matrimony; and I have

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deposited about one hundred and thirty dead bodies of my fellow christians in the silent grave, looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I am not conscious that I have, in any respect, departed from the doctrine or worship of the Episcopal church, *nor from its discipline.*

My nearest neighbours and parishioners, the wardens, and vestries, and congregations which have been under my particular care, have uniformly and very unanimously declared that I have always been to them a very faithful minister, and a very exemplary man; and that although they have been constantly conversant and well acquainted with me for days, and weeks, and months, and years, yet from their own personal knowledge they had not known, or had reason to believe that I had or would depart from the rules of morality and propriety. This has been the amount of their uniform and very unanimous testimony. I now have about two thousand souls in my ministerial care, and I know no one of them who I think would not give this testimony if called upon. But when I bring my own conscience to the bar of God; when I consider the awful responsibility of my profession; when I compare the inward disposition of my heart, and my outward words and actions with the purity of God and the perfect rule of his word, I feel my own imperfection, I blush at my own unworthiness, I see the want of an atonement, and feel the want of forgiveness. And on a review of the unhappy opposition which Bishop Jarvis and others have raised against me, conscious of my own frailty, and sensible that I, like other men, have been liable to err, I now confess that I have often said and done that which, on reflection, I am sorry for; and now declare, that whereinsoever I have gone astray from my duty, whereinsoever I have done any wrong to any person by word or deed, I do now truly and earnestly repent, I am heartily sorry for it, and am ready and willing to make restitution to the utmost of my power; and I humbly pray them, for God's sake, to forgive me all that is past. And whereinsoever any person has done me any wrong, by word or deed, and I have been greatly abused, greatly misrepresented, greatly injured, and things laid to my charge

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which I never knew; I am ready and willing to forgive them from the bottom of my heart, and never more to mention it: and I hereby offer my hand in charity and friendship to all with whom I have had any controversy. I do not ask to be restored to the ministry, for I have never been canonically censured, suspended, silenced or degraded; nor am I absol-

ed from my ordination vows; but I ask for peace and reconciliation, that the beginning of the bishop's government of the church in this state may be like the first day of a new world, where every one is a friend to every one, where all is harmony, all is friendship, and all are pleased, and all are delighted with all. I know that where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work, and I am heartily tired with it. I religiously believe the Episcopal church to be a divine appointment; that it is the general assembly and church of the first born on earth, the medium through which we must become members of the church triumphant in Heaven. In union and communion with this church, I wish and intend, by God's grace, to live and die; and in it I pray God to give me the confidence of a sure and certain faith, the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope; and that I may be in favour with God, and in perfect charity with all the world. In a COURT OF LAW I expect impartial justice, in an ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL I expect mercy, peace and reconciliation. You will please to lay this before the clergy this evening or on the first opportunity, and let me know your determination in the case, at Bishop's tavern, in State-street, in New-Haven; and I am, Right Rev'd. Sir, with sentiments of due consideration, your most obedient and very humble servant,

ANNI ROGERS.

I was not informed whether the foregoing letter and that of the Rev. Messrs. Tyler and Blakeslee were laid before the convention by the bishop or not; but a motion was made by the Rev. Mr. Rayner, of Huntington, to drop all matters in regard to me, and that I should be received as a member of that convention. This was advocated by most of the clergy and laity from the eastern part of the state—and opposed by the Rev. Mr. Burhans, Burrage Beach, and Asa Chapman, now Judge Chapman. This last had been employed as coun-

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sel in some, if not all, the suits against me, for seven years, in Fairfield county. Though educated at the same college and at the same time, he had now become my personal, political, and religious enemy; at this time he volunteered his services, and I was informed discovered great zeal and animation against me; and by his influence, and that of other federals, the motion was lost by a very small majority. Could any thing be more arbitrary, tyrannical and oppressive, than to deprive a clergyman of his rights and privileges, without bearing or trial, according to the canons of the church, in any state, in the face and eyes of the pastoral letter of the House of Bishops, and the solemn decisions of our courts of law; and to refuse all overtures of mercy, peace, and reconciliation? Is not this persecution? But this was only the beginning of that dreadful plot, by which I have since suffered two years imprisonment, and the loss of all worldly comforts.

In the year 1817, the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, by the direction of Bishop Hobart, visited all my parishes, performed divine service with them, preached to them, and gave them public notice that the said bishop would himself, within a few days, visit them in person; that he would perform divine service, preach, confirm, and administer the holy communion to them, and desired them to prepare themselves accordingly. Soon after his return he wrote, and sent the following letter, viz.

From the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee of New London, to the Right Rev. Bishop Hobart, in New-York.

New-London, July 14th, 1817.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Agreeable to your request, I have made a tour through the north eastern section of this state, and have visited nine parishes, preached and performed service in each of them.—Seven of them are purely the result of Mr. Rogers' labours; the other two were but the ruins of what they once had been. The church in Poquatonic, where I commenced my mission, was collected some fifty or sixty years since, by the Rev. Mr. Punderson, but ruined by untoward events during the revolutionary war, and has never been able, (though occasionally visited by the Rev. Mr. Tyler,) to assume an aspect of respectability. The building was almost demolished, when Mr.

Rogers, about three years since, first visited them. From four to six families were the number of Episcopalians then in the parish, as stated to me by the wardens and vestry. The church has since been rebuilt and finished, with a bell to it, and the number of families now belonging to it are from fifty to sixty;—from three to four hundred usually attend. They speak in the highest terms of the piety, zeal and talents of their minister, and of the perfect harmony and friendship which subsist among them. Here I met Mr. Tyler and Mr. Rogers, who attended me in the services of the day.

From this place I, attended with Mr. Rogers, went to Jewett City, about nine miles, where the service had never been attended to but by him. Here I found a handsome stone chapel; finished outside, where I met a numerous congregation, who joined devoutly in the service, and performed the responses in an audible and decent manner. The hearts of the good people were warm, and a spontaneous glow of affection told us how ardently they felt the force of that obligation, which, by your permission, had been conferred upon them. I called upon a number of genteel families, who received me with marked respect, and expressed a warmth of attachment highly honourable to the zeal and faithfulness of Mr. Rogers. The prospect of the growth of the church, although affected by the failure of the manufacturing interest in this place, is, however, very flattering; and the pleasure they felt in being thus noticed, led them to say the village had not seen so happy a day for five years. We left the village that evening and proceeded about three miles, where we were entertained with hospitality and kindness.

Early on Tuesday morning we drove about ten miles, to Mr. Cleaveland's, in Canterbury, where I performed service to an attentive and respectable audience, ardent in the cause of the church, and dispassionate in their inquiries.

From thence we drove to Hampton, about six miles, and were received with equal civility. I performed service at the house of Mr. Litchfield, convenient for a private house; the congregation from two to three hundred, the responses audible, and the attention warm and animated.

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From this we proceeded to Stafford, about twenty-five miles, where I performed service in the afternoon, having but one service on that day. The politeness with which we were received by all the respectable inhabitants, together with their devout attendance on the service of the day, declared plainly how ardent their feelings were in favour of the church; their gratitude was loud, their acknowledgements were fervent.

On Thursday morning, after discharging our obligation of politeness to Mr. Johnson, owner of the establishment at the springs in Stafford, for a particular invitation to stop and breakfast with him, we proceeded to Andover, about twenty miles, where I performed service in the meeting-house, (they having lately dismissed their clergyman,) to an audience of several hundreds, devout in their appearance, and orderly in their devotions. Expressions of approbation in favour of the Episcopal worship were almost universal; a handsome repast was provided by Esquire House.

In the afternoon we rode about six miles to Columbia, where I performed service in the meeting house to an attentive and respectful audience, they having likewise lately dismissed their minister.

On Friday forenoon I performed service in Bolton, about eight miles, in a house purchased by Episcopalians, and fitted up for a place of stated worship. In this place there has been a warm opposition to the church. Few attended beside their own members. They appeared like a little band, girt with armour, supporting the cross, and bearing the standard of their blessed Master. They performed the service with a devotion and ardor that would warm the coldest heart, and inspire the dumbest tongue. We dined at Doct. White's.

From thence we passed to Hebron, about six miles, where at four o'clock I performed my last service. Here a numer-

ous congregation collected from the scattered ruins of a church founded some sixty or seventy years ago by the Rev. Mr. Peters, but miserably scattered during the revolutionary war, and but barely kept alive until Mr. Rogers took charge of them about four years since; from which it has wonderfully increased in numbers, and many have joined the communion.

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On Saturday Mr. Rogers attended me to Colchester, where I took the stage and returned to my family and friends. And sir, when I retrace the circuitous route, of at least one hundred and forty miles, which I performed, every stage is marked with agreeable incidents, and every toil is sweetened with an endearing recollection. If there is any pleasure in conferring an obligation, you, sir, must feel the expression of that gratitude, which animated every heart. Your goodness in authorizing this mission, will long be remembered, as a monument of that charity which delights in doing good.

Here my communication should have ended, but for the pledge which I gave, and a ardent desire which I feel in leaving no interest unessayed, which might tend to promote the interest and prosperity of the church. I have already stated, that these churches have been reared into life by the care and industry of Mr. Rogers, and to speak with caution, they embrace a number of not less than two thousand souls; many of them have received baptism at his hands, have come to the holy communion through his persuasion and influence, and now wait with a hope and expectation of being presented by their own minister to the bishop, that they may receive the apostolic rite of confirmation. This is the only point which involves in it any delicacy. If Mr. Rogers is not possessed of ecclesiastical authority, his administrations are of course void; if he is possessed of authority and constitutionally deprived of the exercise, his administration must be equally invalid. But if he has unjustly, that is, WITHOUT A CONSTITUTIONAL AND CANONICAL TRIAL been forbidden the lawful exercise of that authority which he constitutionally and rightfully possessed, can the interdict in any sense affect the right either in the person dispensing, or in the persons receiving the exercise of that power? ! ! It may not be permitted for me to travel over decisions said to be bottomed on legitimate principles, but I should be sorry to find on the records of the church history, precedents by which, if they should obtain the force of law, the whole right of trial would be committed, and constitutional discipline set at defiance! ! I am disposed to believe that whatever is rightly, that is, constitutionally and canonically bound on earth, is bound in heaven; but can any

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man in his senses suppose that there is any force in a sentence not constitutionally inflicted! ! If such is the case, the whole Protestant church stands this moment excommunicated! The maxim of the Apostle is, that they who have a written law, shall be judged by that law, and to guard this claim, it would appear that we were forbidden, by the highest ecclesiastical authority, to acknowledge, much more to SANCTION ANY ASSUMED POWER. [See the bishop's Pastoral Letter of 1808, page 62.]

For my part I have no hesitation in acknowledging both the AUTHORITY of Mr. Rogers and his RIGHT constitutionally to exercise it. I consider every step, excepting that of deciding, to what authority is Mr. Rogers EXCLUSIVELY amenable? so informal and so extra-judicial that no decision, of course, no consequence affecting the character or authority of Mr. Rogers can grow out of it. And it has appeared to me that the only true ground of proceeding in this case is to commence it *de novo*, [anew] or to pass it by as a clerical blunder, and learn from this example, not to implicate the peace of the church through personal misunderstandings.

I should be pleased to accompany the bishop in his visitation of the church in Hebron, Jewett City, and Poquatonic, (three only of the nine parishes which I visited have churches,) should the bishop be satisfied that it would be consistent

with his duty to acknowledge Mr. Rogers' administrations, and to receive from him, as the curate, the subjects of confirmation, and to communicate with him in the offices of the church; otherwise I do not consider it prudent to hold myself responsible for any consequences that may grow out of your sincere wishes to serve them. This much, I can assure you, that no mention will be made of the unpleasant subject by them, but every attention and every mark of respect will be most cordially bestowed, should you feel justified in pursuing the course I have suggested. Having pledged myself not to lead you into any unpleasant dilemma, I feel it my duty not to withhold any information by which you might be enabled to judge correctly of the feelings of a great proportion of society, and might be enabled to form an opinion and make your decision accordingly. No people, I am sure, will more

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cordially welcome the bishop, or treat him with greater respect, under the forementioned conditions, than those under the care of Mr. Rogers. They hold out the branch of peace on constitutional principles, and they feel that there can be no security left to the church, but by adhering strictly to its principles. And sir, I venture to say, that at least one half of the clergy of this state are of the same opinion. With the most profound assurances of my cordial respects and dutiful submission to every constitutional and canonical direction, I am, Right Reverend Sir, your's, affectionately,

SOLOMON BLAKESLEE.

CHAPTER VII.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

Within a few days after the receipt of the foregoing letter, Bishop Hobart published, or caused to be published, in all the newspapers printed in Connecticut, that he would visit the different Episcopal churches in that state, on such particular days as he therein designated, and among others, that he would visit St. Peter's church in Hebron, on the 20th day of August, 1817, and St. George's church in Jewett City, on such a day in that month, and St. James' church in Poquatonic, on another day in that month. Expectation was all alive. No suspicion was entertained that all was not right, or that a plan was formed for my ruin or their destruction. Great preparations were made for their own spiritual improvement in the public worship of God, and instruction from his word; in confirmation or the laying on of hands, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and God's blessing, all by the bishop. Great curiosity was awakened, for not one out of an hundred of the people in my care, had ever seen a bishop in their lives. Great preparations were made to honor him and to make him welcome. I had taken unusual trouble in preaching lectures on the subject of confirmation, and in going from house to

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house in all my parishes, to endeavor to explain it to them, and to solemnize their minds for the proper and worthy reception of that interesting rite. On the night before the 20th of August, Mr. Ezekiel Brown, one of the wardens of the church, in Hebron, came to me after dark. The heart of the good man was ready to burst, the tears streamed from his eyes, and he was unable to speak; at length, with a broken and a faltering voice, he said, I have bad news; the bishop is a going to disappoint us; he says that he cannot visit our church because you are here; if you were not here he would come.

This was the first intimation that the plan was to drive me off, or to ruin me, or to divide and scatter the churches and congregations, which I had gathered. There was no time for reflection or consultation. If the bishop did not intend to visit my parishes, why did he impose upon the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, by directing him to preach to them, and to give them false notice? Why did he pledge himself in all the newspapers to me, to my people, and to the whole world?

He had received Mr. Blakeslee's letter, and knew upon what terms he would be received. He was expected in Hebron at four o'clock the next afternoon, and it was thought advisable for me to go with the wardens and Dr. Peters, the next morning, to the next town, where the bishop was, and if possible make some arrangements with him. This was done, and he alleged that a compliance with the terms of Mr. Blakeslee's letter, would be an interference on his part with the proceedings of Bishop Jarvis, and would be calling upon himself the resentment of his friends; and that he did not wish to have any thing to do with it one way or the other; at length he agreed that he would perform his engagements, and not disappoint the people, if the wardens would give in writing under their hands, that they would not consider him as recognizing me as a minister on that day. He said expressly, that he did not wish to approve or disapprove of me, as a minister, but that his wish and intention was to leave me to-morrow as I was yesterday; he did not see me, lest it should, by Bishop Jarvis' friends, be construed into an arrangement between him and me. Rather than to have the people disap-

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pointed, they consented to his proposal. He wrote a certificate to the amount of what he proposed, and the wardens signed it. I wish to have it distinctly understood, that he did not see me, nor make any arrangements with me, or what I should say, or do, or where I should be. In regard to this, the wardens were not authorized, neither did they make any arrangement or agreement; but only for themselves and the church, that they would not consider him as recognizing me as a minister on that day. This was the amount of their certificate, and he expressly said again and again, that he did not wish to approve or disapprove of me, as a minister, but to leave me to-morrow as I was yesterday; that is, as discharging all the duties of a regular priest in the Episcopal church. With this certificate, he came to Hebron, in company with the honorable John S. Peters, and others. With them he came to the door of St. Peter's church in Hebron, on the 20th day of August, 1817. From 1500 to 2000 people were, by computation, assembled for public worship, for religious instruction, and for divine ordinances. About 150 persons were present, who were prepared and expected to be confirmed: which is the apostolic rite of laying on of hands after baptism. Great numbers were prepared to receive from the hands of the bishop, at that time, the sacrament of the Lord's supper. When he came to the door of the church, while he was fastening his horse and carriage, I went out and welcomed him to the church in Hebron; he made no reply, but said to one of the wardens, who was present, Mr. Rogers must withdraw; he replied, and not attend church? the bishop said yes; and instantly mounted his carriage, apparently in anger, and rode off, without consulting the other warden or the vestry, without any apology, without going into the church, and without even speaking to the people. The insult, the astonishment, the disappointment, are indescribable. It was with difficulty that many were restrained from offering him personal violence. The federal presbyterians were pleased, and some of them actually triumphed and exulted at what was done. The church people were mortified, disappointed, and ashamed. The bishop, instead of going to the house of the honorable John S. Peters, where he was

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expected, and where he was expected to spend the night, went to a presbyterian tavern, had a lunccheon, satisfied some of the presbyterians (and they were easily satisfied) that he had done right, and rode off. The other churches in my care he wholly neglected and disappointed. Thus more than four thousand people in the counties of Tolland, Windham and New-London, in Connecticut, were in the month of August, 1817, neglected, insulted and abused by Bishop Hobart. This was matter of great joy to the enemies of our holy religion, and to the friends of Bishop Jarvis in the Episcopal church. At this time, some of my friends and parishioners

from Jewitt City, and Poquatonic, to whom I had administered baptism, and the Lord's supper; attended Bishop Hobart's visitation in Norwich, and were confirmed by him, and received the sacrament. At this time, Colonel Jeremiah Halsey, who had been brought up a separate congregational presbyterian, who had for some time attended my ministry, with his family, but without examination, recommendation, or particular profession, now bolted himself in, among others, and was confirmed, and received the sacrament. After service, he had a private conversation with Bishop Hobart, at the house of Col. Tyler, and from that time, and never before, he became my enemy. The plan of causing me to submit to an indignity in my own parish, and in the presence of my own people, and others, or to drive me off and scatter my congregations, by inducing them to believe the decisions of our courts of law and the pastoral letter of the House of Bishops were of no force; and that I was not a clergyman of good standing in the church, was well calculated to effect the purpose of tyranny and oppression, in destroying a clergyman, without hearing or trial, according to any rule, canon or law; and one, of whom Bishop Jarvis himself had publicly and officially declared, in behalf of the convention of the whole state of Connecticut, "that we have nothing against him," [for they dare not come out and acknowledge that my opposition to an union of church and state, was their objection,] "we acknowledge his authority and character to be good." And of whom the bishop of New-York had declared "that he had always considered him one of the most use-

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ful and active clergymen in that state, that he never had heard Bishop Provost, his predecessor, express any sentiments of disapprobation with regard to him, and that he never had at any time, or on any occasion, fallen under the censure of the ecclesiastical authority of that state;" and of whom the Rev. Mr. Tyler of Norwich, the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee of New-London, and many other clergymen, of the first respectability in Connecticut, had spoken in terms of great approbation, respect, and affection. The plan, however, although it checked the prosperity of the church in the eastern part of the state, gave her enemies great cause of triumph, gave them occasion to speak evil of me, was a source of unhappiness to me and to all my people. Yet it was not effectual; they determined still to adhere to me and support me. For this purpose a meeting was called in Windham, termed an EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, at which many votes and resolutions were passed of great importance; some of which are as follows, viz.

At a meeting of the COMMITTEES OF CONFERENCE appointed by and in behalf of the members of the Episcopal church in Hebron, in Jewitt City, in Poquatonic, in Canterbury, in Hampton, in Stafford, in Andover, in Bolton, and in Columbia, duly notified and convened, in the court house in Windham, this 29th day of April, A. D. 1818,

Capt. ANDREW MANN, of Hebron, Moderator,

Mr. PASCAL CADY, of Canterbury, Clerk,

Voted unanimously, That it is our earnest wish and desire, and as far as we know or believe, it is the earnest wish and desire of the people that we represent, to be with the Rev. Ammi Rogers, (with whom we are perfectly satisfied) in union and communion with the Protestant Episcopal church in the state of Connecticut and in the United States, submitting ourselves to its GOVERNMENT, when administered according to the authority of God's word and the constitution and canons of said church, conforming ourselves to its doctrines and worship, as represented and set forth in the holy scriptures and in the book of common prayer. And the reverend and honorable convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, are hereby humbly requested to grant this privilege.

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The letter from the Rev. Ammi Rogers, dated New-Haven Oct. 15th, 1816, (page 67,) to the Right Rev. Bishop Hobart, was then introduced and read.

A vote was then passed approbatory of the said letter; and requesting the convention to accede to its terms, or grant a fair and canonical trial.

A statement was then made, that it appeared to that meeting, 1st, That I had been rightly and canonically ordained DEACON and PRIEST in the state of New-York. 2d, That I had never been rightly and canonically forbidden, degraded, silenced, or even censured. 3d, That I had moved from the state of New-York, and settled in the state of Connecticut, according to the canons of the church, as they existed at that time, and as other clergymen had done and then did. 4th, That canonical notice was given to Bishop Jarvis, and that he actually approved of it. 5th, That he afterwards in an unprecedented manner required of me testimonials from the state of New-York, in addition to my LETTERS OF ORDERS, which had never been disputed. 6th, That these testimonials were obtained and conveyed to the said Jarvis at three different times and in three different places. 7th, That the said Jarvis, regardless of his public and official assurance, of the authority of God's word, and the established order of the Episcopal church, issued and published papers forbidding me to preach in this state, &c.—8th, That a solemn protest against those papers was then justly issued by me, and by a number of respectable parishes, and an appeal was made to the House of Bishops then next to be convened. 9th, That the said House of Bishops then decided that I was exclusively amenable to the authority of the Church in Connecticut, and directed a trial according to the constitution and canons of the church. 10th, That Bishop Jarvis, wholly disregarding the aforesaid decision of the said House of Bishops, his own vows of office, and the established order of discipline in the Episcopal church, issued and published another paper against me. 11th, That the church in Stamford had very justly resolved, that, if the bishop was not bound by the authority of God's word, and the established order of the church, they

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were not to him, nor by him, and had very justly given a settlement independent of him. 12th, That our courts of law in Fairfield county, after full hearings, and fair trials, and able counsel on both sides, had solemnly adjudged and decided that the papers issued and published by Bishop Jarvis against me, were wholly without authority and void, and ought not to be regarded. 13th, That the House of Bishops in their pastoral letter of 1808, had virtually REVOKED AND DECLARED VOID the aforesaid papers of Bishop Jarvis.

Voted unanimously. That we heartily approve of the preceding statements, AND ON THIS GROUND WE STAND, &c.

The Letters of the Rev. Messrs. Tyler and Blakeslee, dated October 10th, 1816, (page 65,) and July 14th, 1817, (page 70,) were then introduced and read; whereupon

Voted unanimously, That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the Rev. Sol. Blakeslee, for his very excellent sermons delivered in Poquatonic, Jewitt City, Columbia, Canterbury, Hampton, Stafford, Andover, Bolton, and Hebron, in the month of July last; that great instruction and benefit have resulted to the aforesaid parishes from the same, and from his friendly and agreeable visits at that time, and that he is hereby respectfully requested to repeat his visits and to preach to us again, as time and opportunity will permit.

Voted unanimously, That we heartily thank the Rev. Mr. Tyler and the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee, for the foregoing very excellent, sensible, and correct letters, to the Right Rev. Bishop Hobart; that the statements and sentiments therein contained are, in our apprehension, correct and true, and that we heartily and fully concur in them.

Voted, That the Moderator and Clerk of this meeting be a committee to publish our doings at this time, to cause them to be laid before the next reverend and honorable convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut, and to request an answer to the questions therein proposed, viz. 1st, To be received into union and communion; as is there requested. 2d,

To take the case of Mr. Rogers into consideration, and to accede to the terms of peace and reconciliation, as proposed in his letter, and to let the matter drop where it is ; or to grant

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him a trial as is there requested. On 3d, To acquiesce in the decision and sentiments of the House of Bishops, as is herein before requested. Signed by us,

ANDREW MANN, ZACHARIAH CONE, Committee from St. Peter's church in Hebron.—ENOCH BAKER, PELEG FRY, Committee of St. George's church in Jewitt City.—JAMES COOK, PELEG ROSE, Committee from St. James' church in Poquitanic.—JESSE PARKES, PASCAL CADY, Committee from Canterbury.—URIAH LITCHFIELD, RUFUS FULLER, Committee from Hampton.—BENNING MANN, RICHARD STROUD, Committee from Stafford.—ELIJAH HOUSE, JOHN TOWNSEND, Committee from Andover.—SETH COLLINS, AMBROSE COLLINS, Committee from Columbia.—JOHN TALCOTT, AARON FARMER, Committee from Bolton. Certified by us,

ANDREW MANN, Moderator of the said Meeting.
PASCAL CADY, Clerk.

Hebron, May 28th, 1818.

To the Reverend Secretary of the Convention of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut in 1818.

SIR,

We hereby request you to lay the inclosed doings of the meeting of the Committees of the members of the Episcopal church in several towns and parishes in the eastern part of Connecticut, called an EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE before the next convention, to be holden in Bridgeport on the first Wednesday of June 1818, and to request in our behalf their decisions and answers to the request therein proposed.

ANDREW MANN, Moderator of said Meeting.
PASCAL CADY, Clerk.

To this convention, I addressed a letter, stating that I was solemnly consecrated to the ministry of the Gospel, for life ; that I could truly say with St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 16, "*Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.*" I then united in the preceding requests ; and further proposed, that if they would not accede to them, that then they would appoint a committee of all the clergy of the Episcopal church in the eastern part of the state, with full power to investigate and settle all matters respecting me, of every name and nature, ever since I had been ordained, that I would pay all the ex-

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pense, and that I would give a bond, with good and sufficient security of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS, to be well and truly paid to the said convention, if I did not abide by their decision.

To confess that they had persecuted me for seventeen years, without hearing or trial, merely because I was a republican and fully believed in the equal rights of all mankind, that there was no civil authority in this country which was not derived from the people, and which ought not, at short periods, to revert back to them ; and because I was a Protestant Episcopalian, and did not believe that there was any ecclesiastical authority which was not derived from God, and must be regulated according to his word and the canons of the church, otherwise it was not his authority, and was of no force ; that the civil and ecclesiastical authorities were separate and distinct in their own natures, and ought not to be united ; that the religion established by the civil law in Connecticut, was an infringement upon the equal rights and privileges of all the citizens, and was in itself wrong. To confess all this, and that they had robbed me of my testimony.—(See Mr. Leeds' letter, page 51.)—That they had altered and forged the journal of the House of Bishops in 1808, (see page 63 ;) that they had endeavoured to ruin me as a clergyman, without the previous steps required by the authority of God's word, and the constitution and canons of the church, contrary to the direction of the House of Bishops, and to every principle of justice and morality.—(See the decisions of our courts of law, page 50, and the bishop's pastoral

letter page 62 ;) and that they had given official information to the church in Glastenbury which was palpably false, (see a letter to the Rev. Tillotson Bronson, page 56.) To confess all this, they were absolutely ashamed, and I now appeal to the reader, and to the whole world, if they could deny the facts with truth. They had injured me too much ever to forgive me ; and not to comply with these most just and most reasonable requests, would be unchristian like and disgraceful. My faithfulness as a minister, and my strict morality as a man, were fully attested in every place where I had resided, and by every parish of which I had the charge, and ac-

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knowledgeed by the bishop himself. I now gave a challenge to investigate all matters relative to me, and offered a bond of \$1000. with good security, to abide by it. The secretary announced to the convention, in Bridgeport, (June 1818,) that he had such communications. Neither the requests nor the proposal was granted or rejected ; but another plan was operation which was designed to justify Bishop Hobart and themselves, and would effectually rid them of all further trouble on the subject. This plan, it is not claimed, was formed or known by the convention, or by all the clergy, but one of them declared to Doct. Samuel Simons of Hebron, that he knew something which was private, and which he was not at liberty to disclose, but which would certainly drive me out of Hebron in less than one year. How could he know this, if it had not been agreed upon ? Would Bishop Hobart ? would the clergy of Connecticut ? would any people in the world, if they sincerely loved God, and their fellow men for his sake, have treated any human being as I have been used ? Would they reject all overtures of peace and reconciliation ?—(see my letter, page 67 ;)—would our blessed Saviour and his apostles have refused and neglected more than four thousand precious and immortal souls ? Would they have conducted as Bishop Hobart did in Hebron, (see page 77 ;) and a still more dreadful plan was now projected.

My mind for some years has been, at times, greatly distressed, from an apprehension that the inward disposition of my heart was not right before God. I could not but feel that I was injured and persecuted, and a resentment would sometimes arise. It was and has been for more than twenty years my custom, on each night, before I slept, to call myself to an account before God, and to note down the particular transactions of each day ; and it is a fact that I have not eat a meal, nor staid a night in any house, nor performed any ministerial duty, for more than twenty years, which, by turning to my journal, I cannot tell when and where it was.

"O Almighty and Everlasting God, the protector of all that put their trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon me thy mercy ; that thou being my ruler and guide, I may so pass through

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things temporal, that finally I may not lose the things eternal ; ingraft and continue in my heart the love of thy name, increase in me true religion, nourish me with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep me in the same through Jesus Christ our Lord—Amen."

"Our Father who art in Heaven." &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BEGINNING OF THAT PERSECUTION BY WHICH I WAS
IMPRISONED AND RUINED AFTER MANY YEARS
UNAVAILING ATTEMPTS.

In the year 1816 Bishop Hobart was invited to take Episcopal charge of the church in Connecticut—I addressed a letter to him, (See page 67,) begging for peace and reconciliation. In 1817 by his direction, the Rev. Mr. Blakeslee visited my parishes, (See his letter, page 70 ;) on the 20th of August in that year Bishop Hobart came to the door of the church

in Hebron, and because I would not submit to an indignity in my own parish, turned his back upon more than 1500 people, assembled for public worship, and disappointed more than 4000 in the neighboring towns and counties. (See page 77.) In 1818 a conference meeting of the Episcopal churches in the northeast part of Connecticut was held in Windham, at which they voted unanimously, *that they were perfectly satisfied with me.* (See page 79.) In 1818 I proposed that the convention of the Episcopal church in Connecticut should accede to the request of the churches convened in Windham; or appoint a committee of all the Episcopal clergymen in the eastern part of Connecticut where I lived, with full power to call the wardens and vestries and congregations together, of all the parishes where I had ever resided or preached and to decide upon all matters relating to me; that I would go with them myself, that I would pay all the expenses, and then offered a bond of \$1000, with good and sufficient security, to be

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well and truly paid to said convention, if I did not abide by their decision. But no, a plan was known to some of them which was a secret, and which they were not at liberty to disclose, and which was kept from me as the hour of death, but it would certainly answer all their purposes, and drive me out of Hebron in less than one year. What this plan could be no one could devise. Imagination was all alive—something was in contemplation—what could it be? One of Bishop Hobart's clergymen from the state of New York came into my neighborhood, but did not call upon me. He visited Dr. Avery Downer, in Preston, who was of no religious persuasion, and who had quarrelled with almost all the clergy in that neighborhood, of every denomination, and who then, and never before then, became my enemy; falsely representing me as unworthy and degraded, and that I should not preach there. It was then reported, that Asenath C. Smith, a single woman about 20 years of age, within about one mile of Jewitt City, to whom Dr. George Downer had been paying particular attention for about two or three years, the year before had been likely to have a child by him and had lost it. AND THEIR PLAN WAS TO INDUCE HER TO SWEAR IT FALSELY UPON ME, after all other means, from 1802, when I proposed to unite with the republicans, [see page 47, 38.] to the year 1818, had proved ineffectual. This plan would certainly drive me out of Hebron in less than one year.

THIS REALLY IS ONE OF THE MOST ABOMINABLE CONSPIRACIES THAT EVER WAS FORMED AGAINST ANY MAN IN ANY COUNTRY. Who formed this plan I do not know, but the testimony of their own witnesses will prove who executed it. And it certainly is promoting truth and justice; and it is suppressing perjury, wickedness and vice, to expose it to public animadversion and contempt. My religion, my principles, and my inclination, forbid me to speak evil of any one, any further forth than a sacred regard to truth and justice compel me. How much soever I may have done and suffered for the Episcopal church, and how much soever I believe the authority, admire the doctrine, and love the worship of God in that church, and how reluctant soever I may feel in exposing the real faults of my brethren, who are of the clergy; yet to be silent

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in this case, would be upholding perjury, subornation of perjury, and the highest injustice to myself, to my children and friends, and to the church of Christ. So soon as this PLAN was known, the vestry of the church appointed a committee, who went to the house where the said Asenath resided, and diligently inquired into the truth of the report, of her, of her mother, and sister, and grandfather, with whom she lived; and of her uncle Perry (Clark, of his wife, Sophia Clark, and of all the family of said Clark, who resided in the same house with them; and of the neighbors; and after the said fair examination and a diligent inquiry; they reported that the charges against me were wholly without any foundation in truth, and ought not to be regarded, and produced the following CERTIFICATE from the family. viz.

Griswold, January 5th, 1818.

We, the subscribers, hereby certify, that the Rev. Ammi Rogers has occasionally visited our family for these two or three years past, when we had sickness and death in the house, and at other times, that we have always considered him a worthy gentleman, an exemplary man, and a faithful and good clergyman, and not justly liable to reproach for any impropriety of conduct.

'Asenath Smith,' the girl, 'Elisha Geer,' her grand father, 'Anna Smith,' her mother, 'Maria A. Smith' her sister.

We, the subscribers, hereby unite in the foregoing certificate, and declare that we do not know any impropriety of conduct of Mr. Rogers.

Perry Clark, Sophia Clark, Lester Clark; her uncle, aunt and cousin; who lived in the same house with her, and this was about six months after the said Asenath lost her supposed child. She, and all the family, declared that I never had courted her, or kept her private company, and that I never had given them reason to believe that I would marry her, and that the whole story was a falsehood: whereupon, in St. James' church, in Poquatonic, it was voted unanimously, that they were perfectly satisfied with me, and with my conduct.

Mr. Enoch Baker and Mr. Peleg Fry were a committee of St. George's church, in Jewitt City, who also went to the

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house where the said Asenath resided, and made diligent and faithful inquiry of her, of her mother, and of her grandfather, and sister; of Mr. Perry Clark and his family, and of the neighbors, and could find nothing to my disadvantage; but that the story was wholly without any foundation in truth, and ought not to be regarded; and so they reported to the church, which report was unanimously accepted; and voted that my conduct had been perfectly unexceptionable. During all this time I was in Hebron, a distance of about 30 miles, and knew nothing of what was going on.

Halsey and Downer being thus foiled in their plan, resolved upon one expedient more, and that was to frighten and compel her to swear her supposed child, for she never had one, not upon Dr. George Downer, but upon me; and for this Halsey entered a complaint against her, before a federal presbyterian justice, of their party, and induced Eleazer B. Downing to swear that about seven months before that time, he had delivered the said Asenath of a dead fetus, and then threatened her, if she did not swear it upon me, she should be whipped at the public post; that she should be stripped naked, set upon a gallows with a rope about her neck, &c. and that she should be arrested on the next Monday. On the next day she left the county, and went privately to a friend's house in Hampton, about 14 miles. Within a few days I was informed what was done and where she was. I went to the house where she was, and she then communicated to me the foregoing statement of what was said and done, and then wrote the following deposition, and gave it me in her own hand writing, viz.

I, Asenath C. Smith, of Griswold, county of New-London, and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, depose and say, that in the forepart of the summer of 1817, and for a long time before, I was in the habit of keeping private company with Dr. George Downer, of Preston: and on or about the first day of July, 1817, and not long before he went his journey to the westward, he came to our house and staid all night; that I then, in the hope and expectation of honorable marriage with him, gave myself up to him, and was on that night, &c. by him and by no other person. I testify, that I never made my situation known to any living creature, in hopes that the said

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doctor would return and by honorable marriage prevent his and my disgrace. I testify, that I continued pregnant by him, until about the 28th of October, when I was delivered of a dead child; which I have always thought was occasioned by being very weak, unwell and having fits; and further the deponent saith not. ASEATH C. SMITH,

Dated Hampton, May 28th, 1818.

The foregoing deposition was delivered to James Lannan, Esq. as evidence at the binding over of me for trial, and was kept by him, but on trial was wickedly and unjustly withheld and concealed, though demanded, and the court proceeded in the trial without it. Will any body say that this was a just and fair trial, before an impartial tribunal? Here was evidence to prove, in her own hand writing, that she had two years before charged her supposed child upon another man, and that she had lost it by being very weak, unwell, and having fits.

From Hampton the said Asenath went in the stage to her uncle's, in Deerfield, in Massachusetts, and some months after her arrival there, she wrote the following letter to James Cook, Esq. who was one of the committee of the church, in Poquatonic, to inquire into the truth of the report of Halsey and Downer, as before stated, and who now reported that I had advised and assisted in getting her away, which was utterly false, for I was not within 30 miles of her, and knew nothing of what was said and done until after she was gone.

To James Cook, Esq. Preston, New-London county.

Deerfield, August 6th, 1818.

I do hereby certify, that I never have known any thing in the conduct of the Rev. Ammi Rogers unbecoming the gentleman, the Christian or the clergyman, and that he is no way justly liable to reproach in any of those matters, which some people have laid to his charge respecting me. They certainly have mistaken the person. I was advised and assisted in leaving the county of New-London, not by Mr. Rogers, but by some persons who now reside there; and whatever misfortunes may have befallen me, they are not justly chargeable to him, but to them, and I think it no more than just and fair to clear him of every thing, of every name and nature, which may involve him on my account. **ASENATH C. SMITH.**

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The foregoing communication, James Cook, Esq. received from the said Asenath by mail, and was delivered to James Lanman, Esq. the county attorney, as evidence at the binding over, and by him kept for the trial; and on trial he withheld and concealed it, though it was called for, and the court proceeded in the trial without it. Here were honor, character, profession, liberty, every thing depending! Will any person say that this was a just, and a fair and honorable trial? for officers of public justice to arraign any man as a criminal, conceal the evidence of his innocence, and proceed to condemn and ruin him, what can be worse? and what was the cause? Answer—see page 39. Under these accumulated afflictions and persecutions, what ought my feelings to be? what ought I to do? what should be my conduct? Shall I, like St. Peter, draw the sword? shall I, like the vicar of Wakefield, take my Bible in one hand, and my gun in the other, and demand justice or death? shall I, like St. Stephen, pray for my persecutors and murderers? Or, shall I, like my blessed Saviour, open not my mouth to them?

O, Almighty and most merciful God, be pleased, I beseech thee, to direct and assist me in all my doings, and in all my sufferings; with thy most gracious favor; give me all such things as are necessary and profitable for me; defend me from all such things as are hurtful, either to my body or to my soul; and finally, by thy mercy, receive me into everlasting life, through Jesus Christ my Lord, in whose most holy name, and all-prevailing form of words, I sum up these and all my prayers, saying as he has taught and expressly commanded me, that when I did pray I should say, "Our Father who art in Heaven," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED.

In the month of March or April 1819, Asenath C. Smith returned to Griswold. Her mother for many months had

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been sick with a hectic fever, which was a family complaint, and soon afterwards died. Doct. Avery Downer, was their family physician, was very unfriendly to me, and by misre-

presentations had made unfavourable impressions on their minds, and particularly Maria was willing to go all lengths. Soon after Asenath returned, Col. Halsey and Doct. Downer went to the house of Elisha Geer, for the purpose of inducing her to charge that supposed child upon me, which she had before justly and truly charged upon the son of the said Doctor, and to go still farther, by saying it was destroyed by me. The whole story was contrived, planned and laid out. They took Asenath into a private bed-room alone, conversed with her in private, they said as friends; they staid all night; the next morning Halsey dictated the whole story which he wished the said Asenath and Maria to testify. Doct. Downer wrote it, and they learnt it by heart. They were promised riches, honor, friendship, universal respect, safety, secrecy, and indemnity. Col. Halsey, was an old experienced lawyer, and knew what would do, and how to contrive. Doct. Downer was a learned, sensible man, and much looked up to. Bishop Hobart's neglect of my parishes, had raised a hue and cry against me; other denominations were all alive, one word, or even a hint was enough to set them in motion, and particularly the Presbyterians in Griswold and Preston, considered me their political and religious enemy. I had built up the Episcopal church where the service had never been performed before, there cause was failing, jealousy and animosity were on the alert. Halsey pledged to those girls, before witnesses, his life, and his honor, that it never should hurt them, it should cost them nothing, they should be protected against all prosecution, and it would be the best and most honorable thing that they could do. And Mr. Lanman a senator of the United States, and a state's attorney, would take their part, would befriend and protect them. Within a few days after, Mr. Lanman himself came from Norwich to old Mr. Geer's, 8 miles, took Asenath into their east chamber alone, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and was there shut up with her until nine or ten o'clock at night; and she says, what he said and did; that he there, and then made her

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the same promises, and gave her the same assurances which Halsey and Downer had done before. He also said to Mr. Perry Clark, that for Asenath to testify against me, would be the best and most honorable thing that she could do; that she should be protected against all prosecution, that it never should hurt her, or cost her any thing, and that she need not, and should not be called upon to testify publicly in this case, but only before a justice and a few friends. Halsey had before promised her, that if she would testify against me, if I had a cent of property in the world, he would get it, and she should have it. All this is solemnly sworn to by their own witnesses. Let any young woman like Asenath C. Smith, be courted for two or three years by a respectable young physician, like Doct. George Downer; let her meet with a misfortune, and have it known and sworn to; and let such men as Col. Halsey, noted for his intrigues with women; let such a man as Doctor Downer, who was then of respectable standing in society, of great art, intrigue, and affability; let such a man as James Lanman, Esq. a senator of the United States, a noted lawyer, a state's attorney, and a strong Connecticut Presbyterian.—Let three such men try their skill upon such a girl as Asenath C. Smith: let them engage her unprincipled sister, Maria, to assist them; and who can tell what they might not induce her to say or do? Who can tell what they might not induce her to testify? During all this time, I was in Hebron, a distance of 30 miles, and was not informed that she had returned from Massachusetts. I was wholly ignorant of the all-night visit, of the private bed-room contrivance, and of the east chamber conference and agreement. The whole business was kept from me a profound secret, until I came to Poquatonic on my regular business; when a friend suggested to me, that he understood that Col. Halsey and Doct. Downer had a plan of some kind in operation against me, relative to Asenath C. Smith; that Mr. Lanman was engaged in the business, and advised me to call on him for information. I soon went to Norwich, called on him, and found that a business of some

kind relative to her, was already prepared, process was formed, and I was to be arrested. Lanman was hostile to a degree; in vain did I expostulate, in vain did I refer him to the

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investigation of the churches in the neighbourhood, to the report of committees, to the documents in my possession. "In vain did I urge a delay until I could furnish him with satisfactory evidence of my innocence. No! the deadly blow was aimed; he said in so many words, that I had done more injury to the established religion of Connecticut, than any man he ever knew; that many of my own persuasion were against me, and that he was determined to drive me out of the ministry, and out of the state. I acknowledged service, procured bail, agreed upon a day for a court of inquiry. The information was brought before Farwel Coit, Esq. his own cousin, and who was noted for favouring Mr. Lanman's views, and was of his own political and religious persuasion. The 29th day of April, 1819, at Joseph R. Willoughby's tavern in Norwich, were the time and place agreed upon for the COURT OF INQUIRY, for which I had about ten days to prepare.

COURT OF INQUIRY

In Norwich, in the County of New London, in Connecticut, April 29th, 1819.

Present, FARWEL COIT, Esq. a Justice of the peace for said County.

JAMES LANMAN, Esq. State's Attorney for said County, and Colonel Halsey associated.

I, Ammi Rogers, was called and answered.

Mr. Lanman read his complaint, which was couched in language so offensive, that I am ashamed to lay it before the public, but which was well calculated to prejudice the minds of the public against the accused, before they had heard the evidence. The crimes charged were—

1st. That I had committed a crime with Asenath Caroline Smith, an unmarried young woman, in the town of Griswold, in the county of New-London and state of Connecticut, on the first day of July, 1817; whereby, she then and there, unlawfully became like to have a child by me.

2d. That I had committed a crime with the said Asenath, in said Griswold, on or about the 1st day of November in that same year, whereby she had lost said child by means used with her by me.

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To these charges I pleaded not guilty, either in whole, or in any part.

Calvin Goddard, Esq. one of the noted Hartford Convention men, who was a strong federal congregational presbyterian, and who was strongly opposed to me in religion and politics, but who I thought would not betray the cause of his client, was my counsel, and Jacob B. Gurley, Esq. of New-London. They informed me that any attempt to counteract any complaint of that kind, brought by James Lanman before his cousin Farwel Coit, Esq. would be unavailing; but that I might hear their testimony and prepare for a trial before the Superior Court.

The witnesses on the part of the state were called and sworn—Asenath Caroline Smith was the first witness. She swore that the crimes charged upon me, just read concerning her were true, and then stated the circumstances, which she afterwards testified were dictated by Col. Halsey, and written by Doct. Downer at the time they came there and staid all night, and took her into a private bed-room alone, and which she told them and they knew were false; and which Mr. Lanman afterwards came there and over persuaded her to swear were true, and it seemed that she swore to any thing and to every thing they wished.

Maria A. Smith, the supposed sister of the said Asenath, was the second witness. She testified that I had courted the said Asenath, that she expected I would marry her, &c. The same which she afterwards testified was false, and which she stated that old Halsey, Doct. Downer, and James Lanman had hired

her to say.

Doct. Eleazer B. Downing.—That he delivered the said Asenath of a dead foetus in Griswold, on the night of the 28th of Oct. 1817, that it was in a state of putrefaction and destroyed immediately; that he did not know who was the father of the child; that within his knowledge or belief I was not there, nor did he hear my name mentioned; that he should judge it was about four months from the time of impregnation; that he saw no mark of violence upon it or the mother, and that it might have been lost by sickness, infirmity, or accident.

Samuel Wheeler, a negro boy, testified that his master, once,

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he did not know when, sent him to old Mr. Geer's after a bag; that they told him to go up chamber and get one; that he looked through a crack in the door, which was open about half a foot, there saw Asenath and me in bed together; that it was in the morning at sun about half an hour high. [Is it probable, that a clergyman would be seen in bed with an unmarried young woman at sun half an hour high, and with the door open?]

Elisha Geer, an old man, then about seventy, very intemperate, very deaf, very dim sighted, a professed deist, and not very noted for truth or integrity. He testified that he invited me there to visit his wife on her death bed; that I afterwards attended her funeral and preached a sermon; that he invited me there on Christmas and I came and eat supper, and staid all night; that afterwards his only son died, and I preached a funeral sermon; that he pastured my horse, and I sometimes came there and staid, and he thought I was courting Asenath, but that he did not know that Asenath had ever been like to have a child, and never heard of such a thing till within a short time.

Mr. Perry Clark and his wife.—That they knew nothing of the truth of the charges against me, and that they never heard of any such things until long after they were said to have been committed.

Welcome A. Browning and his wife.—Near neighbors of the said Asenath, testified that they knew nothing of the truth of the charges against me; that they never had heard any such things until long after they were said to have been committed; that he had reproved his negro for telling that story about me and had threatened to whip him, but did not do it. Mrs. Browning testified that she was at the house of Mr. Geer on the night when Asenath was said to be delivered, and staid till after ten o'clock—had no suspicion of her situation; helped to administer to her in a manner which would have given her an opportunity of knowing. Browning acknowledged that he informed James Cook, Esq. and Mr. Rose, when they, as a committee, called on him, that his negro Sam was a poor, lying, good for nothing fellow, and that he could not believe him when he was sent on a common errand, and that he plac-

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ed no confidence in his story. [Is this negro a proper witness to testify against a respectable clergyman? In any other case or state would he have been admitted?]

Some of the Brewsters and the widow Lester testified, that they lived in the neighbourhood of the said Asenath and Maria, and that they knew nothing against their character as to truth and veracity; but on trial, I am informed, that they wholly refused to testify any such thing, and that on that account they were not summoned.

WITNESSES ON THE PART OF THE ACCUSED.

James Cook, Esq. was the first witness—he is a man, among the very first as to reputation and standing, in that part of the country. He testified that Mr. Rose, and he were a committee appointed by the church in Poquatauc, to inquire into the reports, now charges, against Mr. Rogers; that they called upon Col. Halsey for information where to go; that he directed them to go to Elisha Geer's, to Welcome Browning's and to Ebenezer Clark's; that they accordingly went, and made faithful and diligent inquiry of Elisha Geer, of the

said Asenath and Maria, and of their mother; and also of Mr. Perry Clark, of his wife and family who lived in the same house; that they all, separately and collectively, cleared Mr. Rogers of these charges, and of every other impropriety of conduct at their house; that what they had solemnly assured them, as a committee of the church, was wholly contrary to what they now had testified was true, and that the circumstances which Asenath and Maria had now sworn to, were so contrary to what he personally knew to be true, that he must think their testimony was false and ought not to be regarded; that they certainly must have lied one way or the other; that from the house of Mr. Geer, they went about 40 rods to Mr. Browning's, and made strict inquiry, if they knew that Mr. Rogers had ever courted or kept private company with Asenath C. Smith, or that she had been like to have a child by him, &c. that they declared that they did not, and wholly cleared him of every impropriety of conduct in their knowledge and belief; that they then inquired of them as to the negro's story, that he had been sent to Mr. Geer's after a bag, &c., that

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Mr. Browning informed them that his negro was a poor, lying, good-for-nothing fellow; that he could not believe him when he was sent on a common errand; that he placed no confidence in his story and had threatened to whip him for it; that they then went to Mr. Ebenezer Clark's, and inquired faithfully of him, and his wife, and family, as to the truth of these charges, and found that they were entirely false and ought not to be regarded, and that they could find no impropriety in the conduct of Mr. Rogers; that they so reported to the church, and the report was unanimously accepted.

Mr. Peleg Rose, was the second witness—he was one of the vestrymen of the church, and a very respectable man. He testified that he personally knew that the facts testified by Esq. Cook, so far as they took place while they were together, and as to the report of the committee, were true; and further he recollected, that he himself, said to the mother of the said Asenath, in her presence, and in the presence of Mr. Geer and Maria, and of Mr. Clark and his family: Mr. Rogers is an unmarried man, and if he has ever courted your daughter, and you have ever had any expectation that he would marry her, I do not know that the church would object, but we, as a committee, want to know the truth; to which she replied, I know no such thing, nor do I believe any such thing, and to this they all agreed; and the certificate dated January 5th, 1813, (see page 87.) was then read to them, which they all acknowledged was signed by them, that it was true, and that they then could say no more nor less than what it contained.

Mrs. Priscilla Cook, was the third witness, the wife of James Cook, Esq. and a very respectable woman. She testified that from her own personal knowledge, I was at their house and staid all night, eight miles from Mr. Geer's, on a certain night when Asenath and Maria swore that I was there; that we set up until half after 11 o'clock; that I left my hat, whip, and boots, surlout and portmanteau in the room where she and her husband lodged; that in the morning they were where I left them, without the appearance of having been moved; that I slept in the room adjoining the one just mentioned, and within eight feet of her; that she was upwell and

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had not been lost in sleep all night, and that she did not believe that the testimony of the said Asenath and Maria could be true.

Mr. Enoch Baker, who is a very respectable man, and as much to be believed as any other man, testified, That he and Mr. Fry were vestrymen of St. George's church, about one mile from the place where the said Asenath and Maria resided, that having heard of the report which Col. Halsey and Dr. Downer had raised against Mr. Rogers, they were appointed a committee in behalf of said church, to go to the house of Elisha Geer, and make faithful inquiry into the truth of it; that in the fore part of April, 1818. Mr. Fry and he

went to the house of said Geer and inquired faithfully of him, of the said Asenath, of her mother, and of all the family, and that they all declared positively, that Mr. Rogers was absolutely innocent of the crimes now charged upon him, or of any other misconduct at their house, or within their knowledge or belief; and that the testimony which they had now given, was wholly contrary to what they had informed them; that they must have lied one way or the other, and that he did not think that any confidence ought to be placed in them; that they also went to the house of Mr. Browning, and inquired faithfully of him and his wife, and could not find that Mr. Rogers was any way guilty of what is now laid to his charge, or of any improper conduct; that they so reported, and their report was unanimously accepted by the church.

Mr. Peleg Fry, was the next witness, and is a man of respectability, of truth, and veracity. He testified that he went as a committee with Mr. Baker, to the house of Mr. Geer and Mr. Browning; that what Mr. Baker had testified was true; and that Mrs. Browning informed them that she was at the house of Mr. Geer, on the night when she was said to be delivered, and staid till eleven o'clock, and administered to her in a manner that she would have been likely to discover if she was in child birth, and that she did not know or believe any such thing.

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The following documents were then delivered to the Justice and Lawman, as evidence in the case.

1st. The deposition of the said Asenath, wherein she had testified that on the same first day of July, 1817, she was, &c. with this same supposed child, and that she had lost it by being very weak, unwell, and having fits, (see page 88.) As important as this deposition was, on trial it was withheld and concealed, and the court proceeded without it. Was this just? was it honorable and fair? The year before she had charged this same supposed child, (for it is not certain that it was a child,) upon another man.

2d. The certificate of Elisha Geer and family, and of Perry Clark and family, in which, the year after she was said to have been delivered of the supposed child, under their own hands, they cleared me of these charges, or of any other impropriety of conduct. [See page 87.]

3d. The letter of the said Asenath, dated August 6th, 1818, to James Cook, Esq. in which she says, whatever misfortunes may have befallen her, they are not justly chargeable to Mr. Rogers. (See page 89.)

4th. The certificate containing the Report of the committee of St. George's church, in Jewitt City; that they had been in person to the house of Elisha Geer, &c. the same as Mr. Baker and Mr. Fry now testified.

5th. The unanimous vote of the wardens and vestrymen of the said St. George's church, accepting and approving of the said report.

6th. The deposition of Capt. Thomas Miller, in which he testified that he heard Ebenezer Latham agree with Mr. Rogers to be in Jewitt City about the last of October, 1817, and to bid off some of his property, which was to be sold at auction. This was to shew the reason why I was in and about Jewitt City on the week before the said Asenath was said to have been delivered, though I never knew nor heard of such a thing of her, until many months afterwards.

7th. The deposition of Curtis Hickox, Esq. in which he testified, that on that very first day of July, 1817, when I was accused of committing that crime in Griswold, I was at his house in Washington, one hundred miles from Griswold, that he there and then paid me \$40, in money, and took my receipt in full, dated at his house, one hundred miles from Griswold, on that very first day of July, 1817.

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8th. The deposition of Dr. Wells Beardslee, in which he testified that I was in Kent, [near Washington,] one hundred miles from Griswold, on the first day of July, 1817, and for some time before, and that I was not in Griswold.

9th. The deposition of Homer Swift, Esq. in which he

testified the same as Dr. Beardslee.

Derby, April 21st, 1818.

10th. *Certificate of Mr. Joel Chatfield.*—I do hereby certify, that I have been one of the wardens of the Episcopal parish of Union church, in Derby, for many years last past, and was one of the committee who employed the Rev. Ammi Rogers to preach in said church, which he did a part of the time for about seven years; that I have been personally and intimately acquainted with him for about 14 years last past; that about seven years of that time he made my house his home, and boarded in my family, when he was in the parish, and has occasionally made my house his home, ever since, and that I have always found him a very able, faithful, pious and exemplary clergyman; a man of truth, honor and strict integrity, and no way justly liable to reproach for any immorality or impropriety of conduct; that I have been a member, and attended several of the conventions of the Episcopal church, in the state in which the case of Mr. Rogers was attempted to be discussed, and from what I myself, have seen and heard in said conventions, I am fully convinced, that the ecclesiastical proceedings against him, have been not only unconstitutional and void, but unfair, oppressive, and cruel in the highest degree.

JOEL CHATFIELD.

In presence of LEMON CHATFIELD, STODDARD CHATFIELD.

11th. *Thomas Wells, of Hebron*, in the county of Tolland, and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, deposeeth and saith, that he is one of the wardens of St. Peter's church in said Hebron; that he has been well acquainted with the character of the Rev. Ammi Rogers for between 25 and 30 years last past; that he had relations and friends who lived under the ministry of the said Rogers, in the state of New-York; that he himself was there, and that he considers the character of the said Rogers to be and to have been good; that the said Rogers has resided and preached in said Hebron a considera-

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ble part of the time for between 5 and 6 years last past, and is now the settled minister of the Episcopal church in this place; that the deponent has usually attended all the society and church meetings of said church; that in those meetings he has never known or heard of a vote or voice against said Rogers, except one man, who has long since sold his property and gone off. The deponent further says, that he has attended the convention of the Episcopal church in this state, and has made particular inquiry, and also when he was a member of the legislature of this state last fall at New-Haven, he made inquiry, and is fully satisfied that nothing has appeared in any proper manner, to the disadvantage of the said Rogers; and the deponent says, that he considers the character of the said Rogers, among his parishioners and most intimate acquaintance, to be, and to have been, good, as a minister, and as a man, and equal to that of ministers of the Gospel in general: and further the deponent saith not.—Dated at Hebron, the 26th day of April, 1819.

THOMAS WELLS.

Tolland County, ss. Hebron, April 26th, 1819.

Personally appeared Thomas Wells, signer of the foregoing deposition, and made solemn oath that the facts therein stated, were the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, before me, STEWART BEEBE, Justice of Peace.

Opened in Court. F. COIT, Justice of Peace.

Hiram Haughton, of Hebron, in the county of Tolland and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, deposeeth and saith, that he now is, and for many years last past has been, one of the wardens of St. Peter's church in said Hebron; that he has been well acquainted with the character of the Rev. Ammi Rogers ever since he has preached in said Hebron, and that he considers it to be good. The deponent says that the said Rogers has resided and preached a considerable part of the time, for between five and six years last past, and is now the settled minister of the Episcopal church, in this town; that ever since the said Rogers has preached in said Hebron, he has made his, the deponent's house, his home, and has board-

ed in his family when he was in the parish; and that he considers the conduct of the said Rogers, as a minister and as a

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man, publicly and privately, to be good. The deponent says, that he has generally attended all the society meetings and church meetings of said Episcopal church; and that in these meetings he has never known nor heard of a hand or a voice, against said Rogers, except one man, who has long since sold his property and gone off; that he considers the conduct and character of the said Rogers, among his parishioners and most intimate acquaintance, to be good, and equal to that of the ministers of the Gospel in general: and further the deponent saith not.—Dated at Hebron, the 26th day of April, 1819.

HIRAM HAUGHTON.

Tolland County, ss. Hebron, April 26th, 1819.

Personally appeared Hiram Haughton, signer of the foregoing deposition, and made solemn oath that the facts therein stated, are the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, before me, STEWART BEEBE, Justice of the Peace.

Shipman Haughton, of the town of Hebron, in the county of Tolland, and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, deposeeth and saith, that he has been well acquainted with the character of the Rev. Ammi Rogers for more than twenty years last past; that he had brothers and sisters, and relations, who lived under the ministry of the said Rogers, while he resided in the state of New-York; that he himself was there, and from his own knowledge, and from the best information which he has been able to obtain, the character of the said Ammi Rogers is good as a minister, and as a man, and as a christian, &c. [the same as that of Mr. Wells and Mr. Hiram Haughton, and sworn before the same Justice of the Peace, at the same time.]

On the part of the state, Asenath was again called and examined as to the letter addressed to Capt. Cook. This she wholly denied to be her hand writing, or that she ever saw it, or knew any thing of it; but since, she has confessed that it was her letter, and written by her, and that it was true, and that she never should have denied it, had it not been for Col. Halsey and others; the hand writing was, however, compared and proved at the time before the court. The deposition dated May 28th, 1819, she confessed that she wrote and signed, and would have sworn to it, as she has done since;

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but said that I was the cause of it. The foregoing is the amount of the whole testimony delivered before the court at that time, so far as I can recollect, and so far as the minutes taken by me, at that time, will evince. The case was submitted to the justice without argument; and he, after some deliberation, ordered me to be bound over in a bond of \$750, with good and sufficient security, for a trial on the said complaint, before the then next Superior Court to be holden in Norwich, in the September then following; and I was allowed five days to go among my acquaintance and procure bail or security for my appearance—I suppose in the hope that I would run away. Thus my destruction as a minister, which had been attempted for almost twenty years, was now likely to be effected. Bishop Hobart would be justified in his neglect of me, and of my parishes. Bishop Jarvis's friends would exult in their final success; my parishes were mortified and confounded, and I was in distress. I immediately resigned my parishes and declined all ministerial duties, except on extraordinary occasions. I procured bail and prepared for trial. *Let me pray.*

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, my only help in time of need, look down from heaven I humbly beseech thee, behold, visit and relieve me; look upon me with the eyes of thy mercy, comfort me with a sense of thy goodness, preserve me from the temptations of the enemy, give me patience under my affliction. Thou, O God, who knowest the hearts of all men, knowest that I am not guilty of the crimes charged upon me; in thy good time deliver me in thy righteousness; forgive the dreadful perjury and the subornation of

perjury committed against me : of thy great mercy forgive my enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and turn their hearts ; lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and give me peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, &c.

" False witnesses with forged complaints,
Against my truth combin'd ;
And to my charge such things they laid,
As I had ne'er design'd.

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The good which I to them had done,
With evil they repaid ;
And did, with malice undeserv'd,
My harmless life invade," &c.

35th Psalm, 2d part in the Prayer Book.

CHAPTER X.

PERSECUTION.

To impeach a court of justice is not my intention, where there is no abuse of power. To err is human, to retract a known error is noble, is manly, is generous ; but with the evidence laid before the court of inquiry, where is there any man of good sense and strict integrity, if he were unprejudiced, would have bound a respectable clergyman to a trial for crimes so enormous, and supported by testimony so doubtful ? And where is there another state's attorney who would have gone eight miles, been shut up alone with a young woman, in the situation of Asenath, from one or two o'clock in the afternoon until nine or ten o'clock at night, and there advised, persuaded, and urged her to bring forward charges of that nature, and expose herself to everlasting dishonor and contempt !—for if their story which she related were true, and she had consented to what was alleged, and suffered herself to be operated upon in the manner she represented ; where is the woman on earth, who would, of her own accord, have come forward and told it ? *If it were true*, I say, where is the woman on earth that would have told it ? *If it were not true*, who would have told such a thing against herself ? The story in itself, whether true or false, is disgraceful, and any of woman kind who would tell it, ought to be despised, and not to be believed one way or the other ; yet Mr. Lanman could say to this unfortunate girl, that *it would be the best and most honorable thing that she could do* ; that it never should hurt her, nor cost her any thing, that she should be protected, and that she need not,

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and should not be called upon to testify publicly in the case ; she followed his advice, has broken her peace of mind forever, and brought everlasting disgrace and ruin upon herself, and others, and what good, what profit, what advantage has she, or the public, derived from it ! Let others take warning from this example, never to say or do that at one time, of which they would have just cause to be ashamed at another.

Within a few days after I was bound over, I called on Farwel Coit, Esq. at his house in Norwich, and requested him to return to me the foregoing papers, which I had delivered to him at the binding over ; at that moment Mr. Lanman came in, and directed him not to give them up, and insulted and abused me in that manner, of which any gentleman would be ashamed. Coit refused to give up the papers on the ground that it was his duty to keep them for the trial. My next object was to see the witnesses if possible, and learn from them the cause of their bringing these false charges against me ; but they were kept out of my sight. Asenath was confined at the house of widow Lester, a strong Presbyterian woman of violent passions and prejudices in Griswold, and was guarded day and night, and forbidden to see me, or any of my friends, or to speak, or to have any communication with us. I sent counsel to converse with her, but he was refused. I interceded with Mr. Perry Clark to procure for me the privilege of speaking to her in his presence : that if she was a witness in a public prosecution, one party had as much right to con-

verse with her as the other ; but he said *they were afraid that she would retract*, that she was strictly guarded at the widow Lester's, and that he could give me no encouragement. Maria was gone off to parts unknown to me—I was out of business, and might as well board at one place as another, and it was convenient for me to board at Mr. Baker's in Jewett City, where I had formerly boarded ; and did hope that by some means I might find out the plan which had induced these witnesses so swear falsely against me. I employed several friends to see Asenath, and talk with her on the subject, but no one could obtain an opportunity. It was said that the Rev. Levi Nelson, the Presbyterian minister of Lisbon, and the Rev. Horatio Waldo, the Presbyterian minister of Griswold,

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had interested themselves so much as to go in person to the widow Lester's, and to exhort her to double diligence in keeping Asenath from me and my friends, lest the whole plan should be defeated. I received proposals which were said to come from Col. Halsey, that if I would pay him 400 dollars, the matter should all be hushed up, and no more done about it. I wholly refused to pay one cent, trusting that my righteousness would yet break forth as the noon-day. For about four months, Asenath was kept and guarded in this way, when she had an opportunity of going privately on a visit to Hampton, about fourteen miles. This was soon communicated to me ; I immediately went to see her. At first she was frightened and retired ; within a few moments she returned with tears of repentance, confessing and lamenting that she had been overpersuaded, and wickedly induced by threats and promises to lie and swear falsely against me ; that she had never enjoyed one moment's peace of mind since ; but what to do she did not know ; if she did not testify again at the trial as she had done, she should be prosecuted for perjury and suffer all its penalties ; if she did, she should perjure herself again ; that she knew, I knew, and God knew, that what she had testified against me was false, and that she should be glad to retract and make amends to the utmost of her power, if she could be protected and secured. I informed her that Judge Swift was one of the most able counsellors in the state, and if she would engage to follow his advice as a lawyer, I would do the same. To this she agreed. I took her into my carriage and conveyed her to Judge Swift's, in Windham, about seven miles. She there confessed to him that the charges against me, concerning her, were wholly false ; that she had been overpersuaded by my enemies to swear falsely against me, that she was now ready and desirous of retracting, so far as she could consistently with her own safety, and wished for his advice as a lawyer. He replied, that if she had been overpersuaded to commit perjury, and now wished to retract, he knew no better way, than for her to go before a justice and confess it, and leave the state immediately ; that they could not compel her to return unless she were given up by the executive of the state where she was, and that while ap-

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plication was making to him, she might go to another state: To me he said, that there were various ways by which she might be got out of the state, and that he did not think that there was any man, who, if he were falsely accused, and the witnesses would retract and expose the plot which was formed against him, on condition that they should be protected, and he could not make his innocence appear in any other way, who would not do it. This was agreed upon.

To the Honorable Superior Court of Connecticut, to be holden in Norwich, in the county of New-London, Sept. 1819.

I, Asenath C. Smith, of the town of Griswold, in the county of New-London, and state of Connecticut, of lawful age, depose and say, that the information given, and the complaint made by James Lanman, Esq. attorney for the state of Connecticut, to Farwel Coit, Esq. a justice of the peace, dated Norwich, April 12th, 1819, against the Rev. Ammi Rogers and his conduct towards me, was then, and now is wholly, utterly, and absolutely false and unjust ; and I further depose and say, that the testimony which I gave before the said Far-

